

*Media representation of South Africa's female politicians: The case of the Mail&Guardian
– 2010 to 2011*

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Abstract

This study is a feminist investigation of the reporting on the female politicians in the *Mail&Guardian* using the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development media requirements on content as the yardstick. The Protocol is a regional policy adopted in 2008 by regional governments aimed at achieving gender equity in key sectors by 2015. The Protocol is a regional instrument set up to assist in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The study investigated whether the Protocol's media requirements were being observed by the *Mail&Guardian*. The media's role of providing information can assist the MDGs to be met. These requirements encourage the media in the region to reach gender parity in the use of news sources and writing of news reports that help to reduce gender-based violence and the portrayal of women that is not stereotypic and oppressive. The themes of the study, which were "gender-based violence", "gender oppression" and "stereotypes against women" were influenced by these requirements. Gender-based violence is a major impediment to development in Africa because of the heavy financial burden it puts on governments and communities to treat victims and offer them shelter and counselling. Gender-based violence affects women's full productivity in society because it results in death or victims remaining absent from work while they seek treatment. Stereotypes and gender oppression are viewed as dangerous because not only do they deny younger generations role models but they perpetuate the insubordination of women in society. The study linked the themes to female parliamentarians because being legislators and policy makers, they have a strategic and critical role to play in helping to achieve gender equity. There is a perception that female politicians offer different perspectives to issues. The media can be a vehicle through which these female politicians can express their opinions. This is because the media is supposed to offer freedom of expression to all its citizens regardless of gender. In order to examine if the female ideology had a place in the *Mail&Guardian* a feminist theoretical approach was used. The study employed a triangulation approach in which both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used. The quantitative method was employed to a small extent to quantify the coverage of female politicians. Triangulation in data collection entailed using both the content analysis and in-depth interviews. Findings of the study showed a violation of the Protocol's media requirements. News reporting about female politicians centred on scandals and controversies and journalists and editors were ignorant of the Protocol's media requirements.

Opsomming

Die studie was 'n feministiese ondersoek na die *Mail&Guardian* se verslaggewing oor vroue-politici. Dis gedoen met die interregeringsorganisasie, die Suider-Afrikaanse Ontwikkelingsgemeenskap (SAOG), se Protokol oor Geslag en Ontwikkeling as maatstaf. Die Protokol is 'n beleid wat in 2008 deur die owerhede van die SAOG-lidlande van stapel gestuur is, met die oog op geslagsgelykheid in sleutelsektore teen 2015. Dit dien as instrument en hulpmiddel in die nastreef van bogenoemde. Die studie stel ondersoek in na die handhawing, al dan nie, van die Protokol se mediavereistes deur die *Mail&Guardian*. Die media se rol as verskaffer van inligting kan die strewe hierna bevorder. Die vereistes moedig die media in die onderskeie streke aan om geslagsgelykheid toe te pas wat betref die gebruik van nuusbronne, die skep van nuusberigte wat bydra tot die vermindering van geslagsgebaseerde geweld en die uitbeeld van vroue wat wegstroom van stereotipering en onderdrukking. Die temas van die studie-"geslagsgebaseerde geweld", "geslagsonderdrukking" en "stereotipering van vroue" is gevolglik deur die Protokol se vereistes beïnvloed. Geslagsgebaseerde geweld is 'n wesenlike struikelblok in die pad van ontwikkeling in Afrika, deels weens die swaar finansiële las wat dit plaas op gemeenskaplike en regeringsvlak. Só moet slagoffers dikwels behandeling, skuiling en berading ontvang. Dit het ook 'n besliste impak op vroue se produktiwiteit in die breër samelewing, aangesien slagoffers van geslagsgebaseerde geweld in sommige gevalle afwesig is uit die werksomgewing om behandel te word of in meer ernstige gevalle sterf. Stereotipering en onderdrukking word as uiters gevaarlik beskou, aangesien dit nie net die ondergeskiktheid van vroue laat voortleef nie; maar boonop jonger generasies van rolmodelle ontnem. Die temas van die studie word verbind met vroulike parlamentslede weens hul rolle as beleidsopstellers en wetmakers. Dié vroue het strategiese en belangrike verpligtinge om na te kom in die strewe na geslagsgelykheid. Die persepsie bestaan dat vroue-politici dikwels 'n ander, nuwe perspektief op kwessies bied. Die media kan in dié opsig as 'n waardevolle voertuig aangewend word om die perspektiewe tuis te bring. Die media het ook 'n plig om vryheid van uitdrukking te verseker aan alle landsburgers - ongeag hulle geslag. Ten einde te bepaal of die ideologie deur die *Mail&Guardian* toegepas is, is 'n feministiese teoretiese aanslag gevolg. Die studie het gebruik gemaak van triangulasie, waartydens beide kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetodologieë ingespan is. Die kwantitatiewe metode is gebruik om die mediadekking van vroue-politici te kwantifiseer. Triangulasie is ook tydens die data-insamelingsproses gebruik. Dit het ingesluit die aanwend van

inhoudsanalises, asook in-diepte onderhoude. Die bevinding van die studie dui op die oortreding van die Protokol se mediavereistes. Verslaggewing oor vroue-politici is grootliks toegespits op skandale en omstredenheid en beide joernaliste en inhoudsredakteurs blyk onkundig te wees oor die vereistes.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Research Background

This study sought to investigate how – if at all – the *Mail&Guardian* gave voice to South African women politicians in its news coverage between January 2010 and December 2011. This was done by using the media requirements of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development as a yardstick. The selected themes are: “gender-based violence”, “gender oppression” and “stereotypes against women”. These themes emanated from articles 29 to 31 of the Protocol which relate to the media, information and communication (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2012:16). Lowe Morna and Jambaya-Nyakujarah further note that the Protocol calls for an increase in programmes for, by and about women, and the challenging of women’s stereotypes in the media. These articles are part of the 28 targets that the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development hopes to achieve by 2015 (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:13).

The target that relates to the media states that the media should take measures to promote equal representation of women in ownership of, and decision-making structures of the media, in accordance with Article 12.1 of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which provides for equal representation of women in decision-making positions by 2015 (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:13).

With regards to content, the Protocol expects the media in the region to reach gender equity in news sources, encourage the writing of news stories that seek to eradicate gender-based violence, particularly violence against women, and discouraging writing of news stories that reinforce gender oppression and stereotypes (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:27). It is these media requirements on content that inspired this research.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is envisaged to be fully implemented by SADC member countries by 2015. The researcher focused on the representation of female politicians in the *Mail&Guardian* for two reasons. Firstly, the *Mail&Guardian* attempted to develop a gender policy by 2014, through Gender Links, a non-governmental organisation working with the media in the SADC (Lowe Morna, Mpofu &

Glenwright, 2010:134). Secondly, the media is a crucial area of study because it has the responsibility of providing knowledge and information to help people make informed decisions (Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:278). The media also has power to report and comment on the deliberations of parliaments (McQuail, 2010:168). McQuail further observes that the term “Fourth Estate” was coined by Edmund Burke in the late 18th century to refer to the political power of the press as on par with the other three estates, namely the executive, legislature and the judiciary.

The time period was significant for the study because it is almost mid-way between the time when the Protocol was adopted in 2008 and the set deadline of 2015. The study therefore sought to gauge the performance of the newspaper against the media requirements of the Protocol ahead of the 2015 deadline.

Gender is defined as a social, symbolic construction that expresses the meanings a society confers on biological sex (Fourie, 2008:305). Gender, therefore, refers to male and female. But research has found that, generally, it is women and girls who are overwhelmingly affected by gender-based violence (UNFPA, 2011:1; Cuklanz, 2006:335). The researcher was, therefore, interested in investigating violence targeted at women and female children only. Violence against women prevents them from fully participating economically, socially and politically (Makombe, 2009:65).

The researcher chose to link governance, which in this case refers to women politicians, and the media – for two reasons. Firstly, it is believed that women bring in different perspectives to decision-making in parliament where laws are formulated (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:56). The media’s role is to bring about gender balance in the media on journalists as well as in its editorial content (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:19). The media can assist women politicians to articulate gender inequalities and their impact on a country’s development (Made, 2008:18).

The second reason is that in 2011 South Africa held the first position as the country with the highest female representation in parliament (43 percent) in the SADC region and ranked fourth globally (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:58).

Although the study was interested in investigating content, it did not ignore issues of structure on the editorial team in totality because content and structure overlap. The

researcher, therefore, sought to find out what the structure of the newspaper was during the targeted period and what impact this could have had on content.

In South Africa research has shown that only 1% of gender-based violence stories for instance, find their way in the country's mass media (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:66). This is despite the belief that when women are given voice, they raise issues of gender inequality and women's human rights violations (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:56). It is important for the media to give news coverage to gender-based violence and in particular violence against women because it is considered a "major development concern and a human rights violation" by the UN (Frankson, 2009:4). It is also important for the media to highlight gender-based violence because the Protocol also seeks to halve gender violence by 2015 (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2012:3).

Gender-based violence is defined as:

"An act or practice that results in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering because of a person's gender or socially-defined role. It is the manifestation of control and power, mostly by men over women, resulting from unequal power relations between the sexes" (Makombe, 2009:10).

The second theme of gender oppression and stereotypes is also identified by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development as important. The researcher deemed this theme crucial for her study because the media can perpetuate false images and influence people to judge others on the basis of pre-conceived ideas (Retief, 2010:195). Rabe (in Retief, 2010:196) notes that the media has a tendency to ignore the life experiences and ideals of women because news is often determined by men. Numerous stories miss the opportunity to create awareness on instruments enacted to protect human rights, women's rights or gender equality according to the Global Media Monitoring Project (Gallagher, 2010:34). The media has therefore a duty to avoid stereotypes by giving voice to the voiceless (Retief, 2010:202).

The "symbolic annihilation" of women endangers social development as women lack positive images on which to model their behaviour (Van Zoonen, 2006:16). The media are perceived as the main instruments in conveying stereotypical, patriarchal and hegemonic values about women and femininity (Van Zoonen, 2006:27). Van Zoonen further observes that the media has the capacity to pass on society's heritage, which may be deeply sexist.

Retief (2010:193) cites sexism as among the most common types of stereotyping. Retief further contends that stereotypes provide an easy but problematic way of handling social relationships. The media therefore needs to play a role in influencing opinions and attitudes to ensure that both men and women are represented in ways that avoid sex stereotyping (Sidney, 1988:204). Mills, Yates, Gouws and Gough (2009:8) view gender oppression as a form of inequality which is rooted in race, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion and nationality.

This study differs thematically and theoretically from other related studies that have been done both in South Africa, regionally and internationally. For example, Katembo (2005: i) monitored female representation in the *Sunday Times* in the 1994 presidential and general elections in South Africa. Other studies include the five-year global media women reports since 1995 to 2010 as well as Gender Links' various studies in the SADC countries, such as the 2007 audit of media policies, laws and regulations, the 2010 audit of gender in media training institutions, the 2006 Glass Ceiling study and the 2010 HIV/Aids and gender violence (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:20).

1.2 Rationale

Giving voice to the media is part of freedom of expression and a form of empowerment, yet the media's role in explaining the feminist perspective is constantly being questioned (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:201). The concept of feminist theory and freedom of expression was therefore at the core of this study. Freedom of expression in this case refers to the media's ability to offer all its citizens the right to communicate (McQuail, 2010:193).

Mendes (2011:27) attributes the improved status of women, including how reporters and editors think, define, select and edit news about women, to the women's global movement. News media is considered a key site of investigation in understanding what it has historically meant to be a feminist (Mendes, 2011:49).

Feminism is a specific approach grounded in a consciousness of all the sources of women's subordination and with a commitment to challenge and change the relationships and structures which perpetuate women's subordinate position (Antrobus, 2004:82). The study sought to find out if feminist politics was pursued by *Mail&Guardian*. This was done investigating how female politicians were portrayed.

1.3 Problem Statement and Focus

This study investigated how – if at all – the *Mail&Guardian* gave voice to South African female politicians in its news coverage between January 2010 and December 2011 in terms of the themes “gender-based violence”, “gender oppression” and “stereotypes against women”. The themes emanated from the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development media requirements on content.

1.4 Research Question

The central research question of the study was:

Did the coverage of and representation of female politicians by the *Mail&Guardian* between 2010 and 2011 meet the requirements on content of the SADC protocol on Gender and Development?

In order to answer this question, the researcher studied and analysed hard news articles, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces of the *Mail&Guardian* between January 2010 and December 2011, relating to female politicians.

Reports in the form of hard news, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces facilitate the opportunity for diverse discussion (Mendes, 2011:23). These various styles of journalism include voices of authorities, those closely involved with the event and voices of readers. Hard news involves stories about politics, the economy, social change or other events that take place in the “public” world (Mendes, 2011:26). Studying hard news reports, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces enabled the researcher to effectively evaluate whether the *Mail&Guardian* was able to implement the media requirements on content of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Studying editorials is important because editorials are meant to “express a newspaper’s convictions and to help readers synthesise the wealth of information and argument they encounter” (McCormick, 2003:1).

Studying columns or opinion pieces is also crucial because these reflect the opinion or views of the columnists and are meant to be provocative and provide a lively assortment of ideas that inspire readers to form their own opinions (*Daily News* of Los Angeles, Editorial, 2012:A8). Feature articles are also important because they lie between opinion and news. The author’s voice is distinct in a feature (*Daily News* of Los Angeles, Editorial, *ibid*).

In order to bring in a logical flow of argument, the researcher interviewed both male and female journalists and editors.

1.5 Theoretical Points of Departure

This study employed the socialist feminism theory which belongs to Marxist thought (Fourie, 2008:309). Socialist feminism blends well with the idea of the larger social transformational project, which seeks a holistic approach to dealing with issues of gender inequality (Antrobus, 2004:11).

1.6 Research Design and Methodology

The researcher chose the case study research design in order to understand and give a detailed description of how the themes under review were covered by the *Mail&Guardian*. Wimmer and Dominick (2011:141) note that a case study focuses on a particular situation so that people understand what is being studied.

The researcher adopted a triangular methodology, meaning the use of both the qualitative and quantitative methodology research as well as multiple data collection techniques (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007: 205). In this study data collection techniques used were interviews and content analysis. Beetham and Demetriades observe that using a triangular research method helps build a more accurate picture. The research used, however, mainly qualitative research methodology because the researcher sought to examine concepts such as empowerment that came through freedom of expression. Empowerment can be defined as a process of how those who have been denied power gain it (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:207). Counting was done to measure gender inequality in the newspaper, for example finding out the number of hard news reports, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces devoted to female politicians in the themes in question.

1.7 Chapter Outline

The rest of the chapter outline is as follows:

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

This chapter provides related literature to the study.

Chapter 3 – Theoretical Framework

The chapter expounds on the feminist theory and the rationale behind it.

Chapter 4 – Research Design and Methodology

This chapter dwells on the type of research design that the researcher used and the rationale for doing so.

Chapter 5 – Findings

The chapter will state the findings of this study.

Chapter 6 – Data Analysis

This chapter will give an analysis of the findings of the research.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion and Recommendations.

The chapter gives conclusion and recommendations.

1.8 Chapter Summary

The aim of this chapter was to contextualise the study of which the themes were inspired by the media requirements of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development regarding content. It outlined why the *Mail&Guardian* was selected. It also stated the researcher's choice of this study's theoretical framework, research design and methodology and the rationale for the choices.

The next chapter is on literature review.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Literature review is an engagement with existing literature on a topic. Oliver (2012:1 – 2) describes it as a sound base upon which new research can be founded. Oliver further notes that it is like building blocks which are laid upon the ideas built by others so as to develop new ideas. Bless and Higson-Smith (2009:19) observe that it is a process of “reading whatever has been published that appears relevant to the research topic” purpose is to show what has been done, how it was done and the results thereof (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:24; Du Plooy, 2009:61). Mouton (2009:90) notes that a literature review must be exhaustive, topical and well-organised. A well-organised literature review helps the reader to understand how one’s literature review fits into a broader context (Oliver, 2012:2).

This chapter aims to give a clear understanding of the study by providing background of all elements that brought about the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, particularly the Protocol’s media requirements, which relate to content. Du Plooy (2009:393) notes that literature review enables the researcher to determine the originality and relevance of the research problem, goals and objectives, depth and extent of the study. It is a process to determine the subject area, topic or essence of the research (Du Plooy, 2009:390).

Literature for this chapter is based on information obtained largely from Gender Links, a Southern African non-governmental organisation dealing with media and gender issues. Gender Links has documented a large body of literature on the history and background of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development such as the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer of 2011 and 2012, the 2010 Gender and Media progress study and a 2002 Southern African Case Study on gender equality in the media. It is also based on the 2006 South African Glass Ceiling study done by the South Africa’s National Editors’ Forum.

The chapter will further elaborate on the themes of the study, namely “gender-based violence”, “gender oppression” and “stereotypes”. The role of the global women’s movement in the work around media and gender and freedom of expression is highlighted. The researcher also discusses conceptual meanings of “representation”, “ideology” and “hegemony”. Whereas ideology refers to not only to meaning but to power relations within

classes (Fourie, 2007:218) hegemony is when the ruling class exerts its influence to promote ideas that result in social inequalities (Mendes, 2011:13).

The researcher now turns to a discussion about the Protocol.

2.2 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

The Protocol came into being in 2008 when member states adopted it as a sub-regional instrument aimed at bringing together and enhancing existing commitments to gender equality through 28 time-bound targets aligned to goal number three of the MDGs (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2012:8). Goal number three is aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering of women (Frankson, 2009:7). The 28 targets (fully spelt out in Appendix 2) are covered in 31 articles that fall under the following main provisions: constitutional and legal rights, governance, education and training, employment and economic empowerment, gender-based violence, health, HIV and AIDS, peace building and conflict resolution and media, information and communication. The study is concerned with the Articles 29 to 31 which specifically deal with the media, information and communication (Made, 2008:14). Of the six points listed in the Articles, those relevant for this study were the following:

1. Call on the media in the SADC states to take measures to discourage the media from promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children; depicting women as helpless victims of violence and abuse; degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising; and undermining their role and position in society; reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes.
2. Encouraging the media to give equal voice to women and men in all areas of coverage, including increasing the number of programmes for, by and about women on gender specific topics and that challenge gender stereotypes.
3. Encouraging the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender-sensitive coverage (Made, 2008:14).

The decision to link the investigation of the themes of gender-based violence, gender oppression and stereotypes to governance (in this case female politicians) comes from the acknowledgement by the Protocol that mass media has the capacity to change mindsets and

promote female politicians especially during election time (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:79). Made (2008:18) observes that “women politicians and the media can become allies in making gender inequalities and their impact on a country’s development a central component of elections and national discourses on governance and economic development”. Made further argues that the lack of women’s participation in political decision-making and public life deprives women of important rights as well as responsibilities as citizens. Made further contends that women’s perspectives about policies and legislation are excluded when they do not contribute to decision-making, preventing their input into national budgets and resource allocation.

The Protocol states that there should be an equal representation of women, not only in terms of ownership and decision-making structures of the media, but also in terms of news sources. Sources are people interviewed by journalists to give their views and perspectives on the news events and current issues of the day (Made, 2008:09). Made explains that sources are chosen because they are experts on a subject, are among those greatly affected by the event or issue, and are the ‘subjects’ or ‘main actors’ of an event or issue. Equal representation in terms of news sources is in accordance with article 12 of the Protocol that provides for equal representation of women in decision-making positions in both public and private sectors and to adopt specific legislative measures, strategies, policies and programmes aimed at ensuring women’s participation in electoral processes by 2015 (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2012:16).

The media, as the “Fourth Estate”, plays an important role in educating and informing people on important processes, particularly political processes (McQuail, 2010:168). McQuail further observes that the term “Fourth Estate” was coined by Edmund Burke in late 18th century England to refer to the political power of the press as at par with other three estates of power in the British realm: Lords, Church and Commons. McQuail further notes that the power of the press arose from its ability to give or withhold publicity. The media’s power also arises from its informative capacity, particularly its role in reporting and commenting on deliberations, assemblies and acts of governments. This freedom was considered the cornerstone of democracy, which leads the researcher to discuss freedom of expression next.

2.3 Freedom of Expression

Giving women a voice in the media helps them not to just be receivers of information but to impart it in accordance with the universal right to freedom of expression (Fourie, 2007:178). There is, therefore, an important link between gender and freedom of expression. (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:15) observe:

“It is important to understand how gender and freedom of expression are linked together. Journalists find it hard to make the connection. Journalism is everybody having a right to speak... That is not showing in the media right now.”

Giving voice to women is therefore an empowerment act considering that it is a male preserve (Made, 2008:4). Made further contends that it is men who craft governance and politics discourses more than women. This is despite the fact that women comprise more than half of African countries’ citizens (Made, 2008:4). Freedom of expression refers to the substance or content of what is communicated (opinion, ideas, information, art, etc) (McQuail, 2010:193).

The role of the media in addressing women’s concerns has been weak (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:137). Only 17 percent of women were used as sources in 1 281 newspapers, television and radio stations, which were monitored in 108 countries in the world in 2010 (Gallagher, 2010::iii). In South Africa, 81% of the sources in news content for newspapers, television and radio, were found to be men, and 19% women (Goko, 2013). This is despite the belief that giving voices to women brings different interests and perspectives to decision-making, and creates an opportunity to raise issues of gender inequality and women’s human rights violations (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:56).

Although media organisational and management structure is not the main focus of this study, structures have an impact on media content. McQuail (2010:192) defines “structure” as all matters relating to the media system including its form of organisation and finance, ownership, form of regulation, infrastructure and distribution facilities. Cultural biases against women are imported into the organisational setting through structural and informal processes (Robinson, 2008:80). In South Africa’s media organisational and management structures, women remain under-represented on boards of directors (38 percent), top management (25 percent) and senior management (35 percent) (Lowe Morna & Rama,

2009:3). It is believed that the lack of women in decision-making posts in the media, contributes to the general absence of voices of women in the media because those who own the media dominate with their voice (Day, 2006:226). But in some instances this is disputed because of the belief that ownership can be separated from control (Day, 2006:227). In this case editors are left to take charge of content issues. Van Zoonen (in McQuail, 2010:301), however, disputes the belief that the presence of more women will contribute to more content on gender. Contrary to Van Zoonen's assertion, research (Lowe Morna & Rama, 2009:4) in South Africa has shown that male journalists do not usually cover issues to do with women.

White (2009:iv) observes that more women are employed in the media, albeit in lower positions. White further argues that the media still churn out more stereotypes, which is the next topic of discussion.

2.4 Gender Oppression and Stereotypes

Contrary to Van Zoonen's arguments that having more women in decision-making positions in the media has little impact, Robinson (2008:87) insists that the systemic biases in media work places affect the type of work to which females are assigned, promoted and positioned in the hierarchy. Robinson further observes that gender theory has proved that the attitudinal and interpretive preconceptions of male managers, who recruit people for top positions, do so on the basis of their own self-interest rather than qualifications. Robinson further contends that women are viewed as less committed because of their reproductive role and are either given token roles or left out of top positions altogether, a factor that impacts on how women are covered and represented in the media.

The Protocol on Gender and Development requires the media to challenge stereotypes and to ensure that journalists write gender-aware stories as a way of restoring gender justice to women (Made, 2008:11). Made further observes that stereotyping is when the media portray women as sex objects, beauty objects, homemakers, victims (of violence, poverty, natural disasters, war and conflict, etc.); or when women become front page and headline (main story) news when they engage in activities which are not in line with society's prescription of what women "should" and "should not". A stereotype is a fixed mental image of a group (Day, 2006:418). White (2009:iv) contends that this fixed mental image is caused by religious and cultural beliefs which lead to deeply entrenched prejudices and biased reflexes that pose challenges to the media. White further contends that fair gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty.

Made (2008:31) asserts that although women's overall representation in politics and decision-making bodies is on the rise, women politicians are not a central focus in news. The concept of women's centrality in the news refers to the extent to which women make news in a significant way (Gallagher, 2010:28). Gallagher further states that in 2010 only 13 percent of the stories on politics and government in the world's print and electronic media had women as the central focus of the story. The portrayal of women in politics in and through the media often sends broader messages such as that "politics is not for women" or "women who are in politics are not good women" (Made, 2008:35).

Gender stereotyping can be classified into three categories in news stories (Gallagher, 2010:32): news articles that reinforce gender stereotypes, those that challenge such stereotypes, and those that neither challenge nor reinforce stereotypes. The media is therefore an interesting site for investigation because it is viewed as the focal point of much of the criticism of the perpetuation of stereotypes (Day, 2006:419). Lippmann (in Day 2006:419), however, argues that stereotypes can lead to social injustice although other scholars see stereotypes as a vital defence mechanism in which they can continue to feel safe in the positions they occupy. Day observes:

"This view suggests that stereotyping, as a natural process has a role to play in maintaining sanity and that to arbitrarily reject is as unsavoury or unworthy of our respect would be a mistake."

But the (IFJ, 2009:15) postulates that presenting women in a gender-sensitive way needs journalists to think creatively about the topic at hand, whom it concerns, what should be included in the coverage, in what way and for what purpose. The (IFJ, 2013) argues that media organisations should help overcome stereotypes by re-thinking the way they portray women in the media:

"Our responsibility is also about minimising potential harm to those we interview, recognising that the glare of the media can bring its own danger, and that those seldom heard voices at the edge are as important as those shouting in the middle."

Gender oppression and stereotypes are intertwined. Gender oppression is a form of inequality rooted in race, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion and nationality (Mills et al, 2009:8). Made (2008:35) further asserts that the language used in stories on women in

politics often shows underlying gender biases in the media. How language is used to portray women is an area of interest in this study.

The theme of gender-based violence is discussed next.

2.5 Gender-based Violence

Violence against women only makes the headlines when women are murdered (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:66). Valdivia and Projansky (2006:335) observe that coverage of gender-based violence focuses on extreme violence and is characterised by “sensationalism and voyeurism”. Most serious issues on women are confined to special pages and segments in the media and tagged as “women’s issues”, rather than being placed on the news pages as issues of concern to everyone (Made, 2008:11).

Lowe Morna and Jambaya-Nyakujarah (2011:146) note that a 2011 research project in Gauteng shows that over 51,2 % women have experienced some form of violence (emotional, economic, physical or sexual in their lifetime, while 78,3 % of men in the province admit to perpetrating some form of violence against women. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF, 2000:2) however, states that there is no universal definition of violence against women, with some human rights activists preferring a broader definition that includes “structural violence” such as poverty and inequality. Poverty and inequality are often characterised by lack of access to basic rights such as health and education. The UNICEF report further notes that others argue for a limited definition in order not to lose the actual descriptive power of the term. Makombe (2009:10) defines gender-based violence as:

“...an act or practice that results in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering because of a person’s gender or socially defined role. It is the manifestation of control and power mostly by men over women resulting from unequal power relations between the sexes.”

The UNICEF (2000:2) report notes that “physical” denotes slapping, beating, arm-twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threats with an object or weapon, murder. It also includes traditional practices that are harmful such as genital mutilation and wife inheritance (the practice of passing a widow, and her property, to her dead husband’s brother). Makombe (2009:10) observes that harmful traditional practices also include early marriage. Psychological abuse includes threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the

home, surveillance, threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation (UNICEF, 2002:2). The UNICEF report also notes that psychological abuse includes economic abuse, which is viewed as denial of funds or refusal to contribute towards basic needs such as food and health care. It also means refusal of employment. The report further states that sexual abuse or violence means coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical sex, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing sex with others.

Makombe further (2009:10) notes that gender-based violence manifests in the following forms: domestic violence which can lead to femicide, sexual violence, sexual harassment, trafficking, child abuse and the spread of HIV/AIDS to women through violence. UNICEF (2000:2) defines domestic violence as violence perpetrated by an intimate partner and other family members. Femicide can be “intimate”, which means the killing of a female by an intimate person who can be a current or ex-husband, boyfriend, same sex partner or a rejected would-be-lover (Abrahams, Mathews, Jewkes, Martin & Lombard, 2009:1). Abrahams et al further note that the killing of women by strangers or family members is non-intimate femicide. UNICEF (2002:2) states that domestic violence is the most prevalent, hidden and ignored form of violence against women.

Sexual harassment includes verbal, physical, psychological and sexual attacks; trafficking is when women are lured with the promise of employment and then are made to engage in sex work; child abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological including denial of resources or rights such as education and health (Makombe, 2009:10). Makombe further notes that the spread of HIV/AIDS to women is as a result of unequal power relations between men and women. Men who are physically violent towards women are twice as likely to be HIV positive (Juma & Klot, 2011:26). Furthermore, Juma and Klot note that these same men are unlikely to wear condoms. This means that if a woman is raped, she has one in four chances of contracting the virus which kills more women than men in South Africa.

In addition, gender-based violence has cost implications, not only to victims of violence and their families, but to the state which may have to bear health care and other costs, such as providing safe shelter (Makombe, 2009:66). In order to achieve justice against gender oppression there must be social justice (Antrobus, 2004:81).

This leads to the next discussion: feminist politics.

2.6. Feminist Politics and the Women's Global Movement

Feminism is a specific politics that recognises and challenges all sources of women's subordination (Antrobus, 2004:16). Antrobus further observes that the consciousness of sexism and sexist oppression is the essence of feminist politics, and is the politics that energises women's movements, whether or not the word "feminist" is used. Antrobus further notes that it is possible to identify feminist politics as a specific element within a broader universe of women's and other social movements.

The gains that have been achieved in improving the status of women so far can largely be attributed to the women's global movement. Frankson (2009:04) notes that the recognition of women has existed vividly since the 1940s. Antrobus (2004:29) observes that it was only in the 1970s that the vibrancy of the global movement began to be felt. Antrobus (2004:22) refers to the three waves of the women's global movement (to be elaborated on in Chapter Three). The first wave was located in the colonial period, which coincided with the emergence of social reform movements that had their primary focus on transformation of cultural practices affecting civil laws, marriages and family life. It was basically about the suffrage of women (DeMonte, 2010). DeMonte further points out that women recognised that women's suffrage rights alone were not enough, hence the birth of second wave feminism. In the second feminism wave, women demanded better pay, job opportunities and reproductive rights (Antrobus, 2004:29). Third Wave feminism challenged the homogeneity of women as a group and was more contentious as well as a great deal of debate around it (Mills, 2008:22).

Women's movements are often confused with feminist movements although feminist movements can be part of women's organisations (Antrobus, 2004:12; Mills et al, 2009:27; Hooks 2000:viii). Hooks further notes that women's movements are not anti-male. What differentiates women's movements from feminist movements or any other movement is that a women's movement focuses on gender identity (identity politics) and the larger project for social transformation (Antrobus 2004:13; Mills et al, 2009:26). A women's movement can be defined as a political movement, which rejects patriarchal privilege and control, as central to politics of women's movements (Antrobus, 2004:13-14):

"In most instances, the movement is born at the moments in which individual women become aware of their separateness as women, their alienation, marginalisation, isolation or even abandonment within a broader movement for social justice or social change."

Women's groups have firmly put women's rights on the international agenda through advocacy (UNICEF, 2002:3). The World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 accepted that the rights of women are human rights and adopted a Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UNICEF, 2002:3).

The UN also views violence against women as a major development concern (Frankson, 2009:5). Women in Development programmes (WID) and projects in many developing countries grounded the work of women's organisations on issues of concern to women in their everyday lives. This contributed to strengthening and expanding women's movements (Antrobus, 2004:47). WID was critiqued in the 1970s for its focus on men and that development would trickle down to women (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:201). A prominent scholar, Esther Boserup, argued that WID left out women (Antrobus, 2004:47). WID was further critiqued by women from the South (developing nations) who identified race, class, religion and sex as impacting on gender relations (Antrobus, 2004:48; Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:202). The critique gave rise to the Gender and Development (GAD) approach which focused on the hierarchical relations between men and women that tended to disadvantage women (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:201). Beetham and Demetriades further observe that GAD recognised gendered subordination was constructed at many levels through many institutions including the household, community and the state.

By the time women held the Beijing Fourth World Conference on women in 1995, which adopted the Beijing Platform for Action, from which many plans of actions on women stem from, women from the economic South were highly visible in the international leadership of the women's movement (Antrobus, 2004:53). The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is therefore the only sub-regional instrument that brings together all the existing targets for achieving gender equality and enhances these through concrete targets and time frames (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:17). The Protocol is in line with the 1995 media requirements of the Beijing Platform for Action (Frankson, 2009:4).

Gender Links believes the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development has helped to revive the women's movement in the region (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:304), although Duncan (in Fourie, 2008:328) disputes this. Duncan believes that the women's movement in South Africa has long died, attributing this to the lack of an active women's media movement. South Africa nevertheless holds the number one position as the country with the highest female representation in parliament (43 percent) in Africa and fourth

position in the world (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2012:57). But South Africa slid back during its local government election in 2011 to 38 percent.

The researcher next turns to discussing news as representation and how this intertwines with hegemony and ideology.

2.7 Representation, Hegemony and Ideology

Ideology is defined as a way of affixing meaning to text, which is what newspapers do (Fourie, 2007:218). Ideology is a Marxist tradition of examining class and power relations and refers to a system of beliefs, which are partial, misguided and distorted and conceal real imbalances of power in society (Mendes, 2011:12; Fourie, 2007: 307). Mendes further notes that the father of Marxism, Karl Marx, used ideology to examine why the working class did not rebel against dominant classes, arguing that ideology was the expression of a class position, where those owning the means of production controlled the means of mental production as well. Mendes further observes that consequently, Karl Marx concludes that the ruling classes are responsible for maintaining and reproducing ideologies that favour the dominant classes by representing certain social inequalities as “normal” and “natural”. But Mendes further argues that ruling groups do not really get full consent unless they accommodate views from subordinate groups. This is why patriarchy has made several concessions over the years albeit through lobbying and advocacy by women’s movements.

McQuail (2010:120) views constructions of femininity and masculinity as part of a dominant ideology. This study’s emphasis was to examine how texts, in this case hard news reports, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces “positioned the female subject”. McQuail (2010:344) notes that such an analysis goes beyond just examining stereotypes but contributes to gender construction or definition of femininity.

Tied to ideology is hegemony, where ideological dominance is not simply imposed by the ruling class but is a process of negotiation where dominant societies feel they can impose their needs and desires on others (Mendes, 2011:13). The concept of ideology and hegemony form the basis of the understanding of representation. Fourie (2007:313) notes that ideology is a system of representation. It is a set of belief systems that may be presented by the media as “false” and used to guide people in their understanding of the world. Fourie (2007:307) points out that the mass media gives meaning to the world using systems of representations such as language and pictures. The mass media may try to justify a narrow perspective while

at the same time concealing other interpretations (Fourie, 2007:321). The media is therefore one platform where ideology is produced, reproduced and reinforced. Studies of gender representation therefore seek to analyse how power flows through binaries such as masculinity/femininity and the private/public spheres (Mendes, 2011:13).

This study differs thematically and theoretically from other related studies that have been done both in South Africa, regionally and internationally. For example, the Global Media Women report that documents on how both the print and electronic media gives voice to women in general every five years, with the latest being in 2010 (Gallagher, 2010:iii). Gallagher further notes that the Global Media Women report examines the extent to which women are used as sources in the print and electronic media as well as showing how gender-based violence is covered. It does not, however, make a correlation between gender-based violence and female politicians, as this research does. Various studies by Gender Links in SADC and South Africa, such as the 2007 Audit of Media Policies, Laws and Regulations, 2010 Audit of Gender in Media Training Institutions, 2006 Glass Ceiling Study and 2010 HIV/AIDS and Gender Violence, among others, do not specifically target women politicians and media (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:20).

This study is also different from other studies from a theoretical approach. For example whereas Katembo (2005:i) monitored female representation in the *Sunday Times* in the 1994 presidential and general elections in South Africa. She drew on perspectives from cultural studies and used the constructionist approach to representation and the sociology of news production to analyse her study. This study utilised the socialist feminist approach.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed literature that deals with gender-based violence, stereotypes and gender oppression and located that within the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The study is embodied in feminist politics, which recognises the subordination of women in all structures of society and institutions and states the types of feminism waves that have influenced the women's global movements to lobby and advocate for change against violence against women and oppression and stereotypes. The chapter articulates the role of the women's movement in lessening the patriarchal hegemony.

The next chapter discusses this study's theoretical framework.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

Theory is defined as a general proposition that serves to make sense of an observed reality and guides the collection and evaluation of evidence (McQuail, 2005:5; Du Plooy, 2009:21). Wimmer and Dominick (2006:44) observe that theory “is designed to simplify research”. This study used the socialist feminist theory. Robinson (2009:80) posits that when using the feminist theory the female experience is the central focus, which is the case with this study. Feminist research is aimed at documenting gender discrimination and to propose a political remedy (Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:274; Du Plooy, 2009:32). Valdivia and Projansky further argue that not all research on gender and the media is feminist and that a commitment to gender justice must be a standard that unites research identified as feminist. Moreover, efforts toward gender justice must be mindful of issues of diversity, such as race and class (Valdivia & Projansky 2006:274). Feminist research also acknowledges that gender and identity are socially constructed rather than biologically determined (Robinson 2009:80).

This chapter sought to give a historical context of the feminist theory and how it has evolved in both the Western and African settings. The African perspective was important to highlight in order to give more context to this study, located in Africa. The chapter showed that feminist research is part of a broader cultural theory. Fourie (2007:276) contends that culture in the mass media is a contested terrain because it deals with issues of power and ideology. Gallagher (2010:iv) notes that cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are reinforced through the media.

Themes of this study namely “gender-based violence”, “gender oppression” and “stereotypes against women” are concerned with the feminist ideology. Mendes (2011:13) posits that “studies of representation seek to explore hidden structures and uncover ideologies embedded in texts”. Mendes further notes that such ideologies contribute to systems of power in society. Gallagher (2010:iii) argues that under-representation, insufficient media coverage, and the prevalence of stereotypical information are obstacles to the equal enjoyment of freedom of expression. The media merits close inspection because it is the main source of information for many societies and has the potential to cause or prevent social change (Mendes, 2011:02; Gallagher, 2010:iv). Gallagher further sums this up thus:

“A nation or society that does not fully know itself cannot respond to its citizens’ aspirations. Who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed matters. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important.”

Of the three Feminism Waves it is the Third Wave Feminism, in which this study is located, which has exhibited more fractures not only between geographical boundaries but among different classes, race and age (Mills, 2008:22). These differences have in some instances resulted in a rejection of the term “feminism” although women engage in it every day, sometimes without knowing (Antrobus, 2004:144). Caine (1995:2) argues that the rifts surrounding the feminism debates started with the term “feminist”. African scholars such as Amadiume (1997:104) and Oyewumi (2005:xiv) contend that feminism is often viewed from a foreign point of view. Amadiume and Oyewumi argue that capitalism destroyed the feminism that existed in Africa. While capitalism gave the opportunity for women in the West to work and earn income, it was also a source of oppression as it prevented women from developing themselves. In the African setting and before the on-set of capitalism, women had predominantly owned the means of production (Amadiume, 1997:101). Amadiume argues that patriarchy and matriarchy in African culture co-existed whereas in the Western concept, patriarchy “seeks to control and rule women”. Oyewumi further argues that most feminist studies are based on theoretical tools from Western concepts such as North America and Western Europe. Oyewumi therefore argues that feminism in Africa must be studied on its own terms, which is precisely why the researcher settled on the socialist feminism theory as an analytical tool for this study. The socialist feminist theory was most ideal for this study because it deals with the broader level of feminist politics, sometimes known as the “larger social project” (Antrobus 2004:12).

The origins of feminism and the different waves are discussed next.

3.2 Feminism Waves

The public construction of any identity by the media is important because of the power of the media in socialising individuals (Fourie, 2008:316). McQuail (2010:559) defines identity as a specific characterisation of person, place by self or others, according to biographical, social, cultural or other features. McQuail further notes that communication is a necessary condition for forming and maintaining identity although it has the potential to weaken or undermine it. Individuals are influenced by the media (Wood, 2007:256). From a Marxist point of view

those who control the means of production, such as the mass media, essentially control culture and the mindsets of media users (Fourie, 2007:276). The mass media therefore serves as a carrier of the dominant ideology. Ideology is a belief system or ideas disseminated or reinforced by communication (McQuail, 2010:559; Fourie, 2007:307). Ideology is closely connected to the mass media because it is a vehicle used to disseminate ideas. On this issue (Antrobus, 2004:167) observes:

“Feminist analysis recognises the role of ideology in the construction of definitions of the male and female and how the ideology of patriarchy is dispersed and reproduced through a gender ideology that lies at the centre of human socialisation, providing the framework for hierarchy, authoritarianism and dichotomies.”

Antrobus further observes that the gender ideology is “produced, reproduced and reinforced” through institutions such as the media although the starting process of socialisation is in the household. Fourie (2009:218) notes that “[w]ithout ideology it is difficult to imagine how any signification would be possible at all”. Fourie likens ideology to a “shared world view” which helps readers to decode or read the same meaning out of a text although it is not always the case. Fourie (2009:317) further illustrates how ideology is used by the media by noting that when trying to make sense of gender roles and statuses, the media tend to represent males and females within conventional stereotypes:

“For instance the media see boys and men mainly as action seeking, aggressive (sexually and in the workplace) independent physically strong beings, who as the saying goes, ‘bring home the bacon’. Girls and women, on the other hand, are portrayed as gorgeous, skinny, voluptuous, sensitive, cry babies, mothers, stay-at-home wives, submissive and even incompetent.”

The mass media is largely used to communicate ideologies, particularly of the dominant class (Fourie, 2007:312). Fourie further points out that the fact that the mass media is male-dominated, there is an assumption that it is used to producing reports that support male ideology which may stereotype or reinforce oppression against women. Fourie points out that the media may serve to give a false ideology about a subject that may be viewed as reality when in actual fact it is not.

Because of stereotypes that Fourie has mentioned above, globally the media has shown a negative perception of women and this has been blamed on the patriarchal organisational structures and in the news content the mass media “churns out” (Mendes, 2011:27). It has, however, been argued that most women see the “woman view” in a news report than men (Gallagher, 2010:ix). Mendes further observes that while there are few women media owners and female decision makers in news media organisations world-wide, the other challenge is that the few women available do not challenge the patriarchal ideology. But before discussing patriarchy, the researcher will examine the different feminism stages and types for more understanding on how the feminist theory has evolved and the concomitant shifts of the media scholarship on the feminism ideology.

The term “feminism” has been questioned since its inception in the 1890s with its meaning and its usefulness remaining a subject of intense debate (Caine, 1995:2). These debates have resulted in the fracturing of women's movements along the lines of race, class, age and sexual orientation (Thornham, 2007:2). The First Wave emerged in the 1890s from three distinct sources: the social reform movements that emerged in colonised countries which focused on the transformation of the cultural practices affecting civil laws, marriage and family life; the major debate within the social democratic and communist organisations which centred debates on the “woman question”; and the struggle for women’s reproductive rights exclusively in Europe and North America (Antrobus, 2004:22).

First Wave Feminism came to be associated with women’s suffrage as women fought for property rights and the right to vote (Steeves, 1997:392). But Amadiume (1997:102) argues that this was not the case with African women who were basically agriculturalists and therefore had both a public role and power. Amadiume further argues that an African woman’s power was based on her very important and central economic role. The women’s economic roles were not confined to the household but to the market place where the women were involved in buying and selling.

Steeves (1997:392) notes that the struggle for American and European women in the Second Wave was different; it was about fighting for equal pay and employment. The Second Wave was marked by the publication in the USA of Betty Friedan’s book, *The Feminine Mystique*. The book articulated female frustration about being confined to the home (DeMonte, 2010). Friedan illustrated women’s struggles in her description termed “the problem that has no name” (Friedan, 1963:19). Much of the politicisation of feminism began

in the Second Wave, which resulted in feminism becoming much more difficult to define (Beasley, 2006:202). For example Friedan helped set up the National Organisation for Women (NOW) to “bring women into the mainstream of society in truly equal partnership with men”. NOW advocated for an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) aimed at providing a constitutional guarantee to gender equity after women in the US had won the right to abortion (Beasley, 2006:202). ERA had initially been mooted in 1923 and NOW had revived the idea but it was never ratified because of disagreements among them about the wording “sex” as opposed to “gender” by radical feminists, who initiated the women’s liberation movement (DeMonte 2010).

Gender dictates how to dress, act and behave as a man or a woman. For example, men are viewed as strong, aggressive, sexual, intelligent and interested in public affairs than women who are viewed as weak, passive, irrational and interested in private affairs (Mendes, 2011:14). DeMonte further notes that the “women’s libbers,” as they were denigrated by the media, began challenging feminine beauty standards, gender roles, violence against women and sexual double standards. To Friedan and other older feminists, the radical activists were overly focused on “frivolous” issues (and nebulous concepts like “sexual liberation”) rather than pragmatic matters such as education and employment. Some radical feminists believe that patriarchy cannot be eradicated as it is embedded in everything from values, to language (Fourie, 2008:311). Fourie further cites Kate Millet as the first radical feminist who argued that women’s subordination lay within patriarchy’s sex and gender system. Millet suggested that the only way to rid society of male dominance was to eliminate gender.

Contrary to radical feminists, liberal feminists are not concerned with psychological origins of gender differences (Steeves, 1997:392). Liberal feminism is considered a middle-of-the-road feminism, which believes that women should not gain status by marriage but by what each person is capable of in their own right (Carter & Steiner, 2004:347; Wood, 2007:319). The liberalists believe inequity is simply a matter of irrational prejudice that can be served through rational argument. The liberal feminists believe equal opportunity is possible within existing capitalist socio-economic systems. The liberal feminists also believe that negative representation of the media is also a form of discrimination, which, if corrected would improve the status of women (Dow, 2006:265).

Dow further observes that socialist feminists, on the one hand, sought an economic and social transformation, and on the other, an adoption of socialist political objectives.

These divisions between feminists were a major focus of debate and tension throughout most of the 1970's and '80's (Caine, 1995:12). Mendes (2011:48) notes that women in the Second Wave began to notice that their positioning in society had more to do with ideology than biology, which led to women's agitation for change.

But for African women, the Second Wave period is when capitalism and imperialism as well as Islam had taken roots, which were perceived to be the primary causes of women's oppression (Amadiume, 1997:104). Amadiume contends that European imperialism and the coming of Arabs to Africa introduced a new gender politics favouring men and undermining the traditional system of balance of power politics between African men and women. Amadiume (1997:95) argues that oppression against women in Africa and patriarchy were imported from Europe and Arab countries during the slave period from the sixteenth century. To that end (Amadiume, 1997:198) blames westernisation for distorting the term "feminism". For her, matriarchy, which she defines as African women's construct of motherhood, was a means of institutional and ideological empowerment. But Amadiume claims that for European women, the patriarchal construct of motherhood was an instrument of women's oppression, commoditisation and self-alienation. Cheikh Anta Diop (in Amadiume, 1997:111) also affirms that Islam, Western Christianity and education eroded African culture and led to a male bias ruling system.

Coming to Third Wave feminism, Mills (2008:22) observes that in the UK the period is used to refer to women who are trying to work with more constructionist models of gender rather than as originating in biological difference. However, Mills further contends that in the US the difference between the Second and Third Wave feminism is viewed less as a theoretical issue but rather as a generational conflict between young and older established feminists. Mendes (2011:132) and Mills (2008:22) argue that Third Wave feminism is more contentious because it lacks one single identity or goal. But Antrobus (2004:15) argues that there is no such thing as a "single issue struggle because women do not live single issue lives". Antrobus notes that insistence on focusing on gender in isolation from issues like race, ethnicity and class have been more divisive. Antrobus (2004:16) believes it is counter-productive to separate the varied forms of oppression because of the systemic links between them. Third Wave feminism, which is also termed the post-feminism period, also assumes implicitly that the aims of feminism have been achieved and therefore feminism is largely irrelevant (Mills, 2008:23). Mills argues that post-feminism also defines men as better feminists than women. Valdivia and Projansky (2006:285) re-affirm this point:

“The logic being that if feminism has been successful and men and women are now equal, then men can be feminists just like women”.

Post-modern feminism has since the 1980s seen new forms of cultural feminism inspired by the work of Michael Foucault. These question the very meaning of the term “woman” (Caine 1995:2013). Amadiume (1997:113) notes that in Western culture gender distinction is either a “he” or a “she” whereas in the African history of matriarchy there are three systems, namely male, female and the non-gendered collective pronoun used in place of the discriminatory gendered pronouns he/she/his/her/him/her. Oyewumi (2005:xiv) argues that in Africa, social roles are not necessary biological roles. Oyewumi argues the best examples are the categories of “husband” and “wife”. Neither of these conjugal categories, and nor kinship classifications that are sex specific.

“With this possibility of a non-gendered status and role, a woman need not be masculinised in order to wield power” (Oyewumi, 2005:xiv)

Black feminist theory is more visible in the Third Wave as a build up to the inadequacies of the Second Wave as there was a tendency to present women in Africa as a category or a homogenous powerless group (Antrobus, 2004:124; Sheridan, 1995:88). Black feminism refers to struggles of black women who felt that Western feminism claimed to speak for their experiences when that was not the case (Yeatman, 1995:53). Spellman (1998:14) states that “even if we say all women are oppressed by sexism, we cannot automatically conclude that the sexism that all women experience is the same.” Sheridan (1995:88) asserts that in that case there is need to investigate how media representations actually work.

This brings the researcher to discuss the role of the mass media in advancing the feminist theory.

3.3 Mass Media and Feminist Theory

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognises media monitoring of gender in the news as a tool for change towards gender equality (Gallagher, 2010:vii). Gallagher further points out that it was recognised that news is the prime source of information and it has the ability to influence policy agendas. Mass communication is both a societal and cultural phenomenon (McQuail, 2011:81). Culture is historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols which may be texts, discourses and artefacts which may be interpreted differently (Thompson, 1990:132; Geerts, 1973:44).

Feminist theory is part of a broader theory that belongs to the critical cultural theory category that emerged in the 1960s to empower readers and audiences (Hartley, 2008:39). It owes its beginning to the Marxist School of Applied Research in Frankfurt who argued that the mass media undermined the views that opposed the dominant capitalist class interests (Du Plooy, 2009:31). The Frankfurt School critics also observed that there was a false notion that the mass media brought enlightenment, yet the reality was that views of the dominant class had come to condition the economic base, especially by promoting a false consciousness among the working class (McQuail, 2011:116). In other words, arts and culture lost their intrinsic values and were considered in terms of cost and demand (Du Plooy, 2009:31). The period between the 1940s and 1970s saw the development of the critical approach which is mostly associated with the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. The Birmingham School is viewed as part of a critical discourse that developed around struggles over identity, power and representation, although the study of ideology in media culture remains central (Hartley 2008:39; McQuail, 2011:116).

The central person to this school is Stuart Hall, who proposed a model of encoding and decoding media discourse (McQuail, 2010:117). Hall was interested in answering how power was transmitted through texts such as newspapers, leading to the practice of critical readings or demystification (Hartley, 2008:41). This encoding and decoding of messages was meant to find out how meaning was conveyed or constructed in large scale media, what some of the dominant meanings were, and what needed to be done to emancipate subordinate groups from being subject to them. Hartley further observes that gender became the centre of focus together with issues such as ethnicity, race and the working class. McQuail (2010:120) argues that cultural feminist studies go deeper than mere analysis of under-representation of women in the media and stereotyping.

More robust feminist scholarship emerged in the early to mid-1970s in the USA (Newbold, 1995:389). These studies centred on frequency of coverage of “first woman to” projects (Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:275). Valdivia and Projansky contend that this included research on women images in the hope that this would change the status of women. It revealed that women were more objects rather than active subjects and that they were almost non-existent in the media except in pornography, fashion and food pages (Newbold, 1995:389; Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:275). The media, therefore, failed to provide positive role models (Newbold, 1995:389). Later feminist research extended to advertising and its impact on children (Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:276).

The 1990s focused on studies on the “glass ceiling” defined by Robinson (2009:82) as “those artificial barriers based on attitudinal and organisational bias that prevents qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organisation into management level positions”. Although research in this area focused initially on the role of women journalists, this later progressed to focusing on the ways that the feminist ideology was negotiated in producing media products (Valdivia & Projansky, 2006:277).

Scholarship on violence against women is a phenomenon of the 1990s, and reporting of this has shown that media constructions on masculinity emphasise and even glorify violence (Cuklanz, 2006:336). Cuklanz further notes that research around violence against women is usually examined under the social construction of news which question the values and definition of news that results in flawed and often superficial coverage. The social construction of news analysis traces the way ideologies and stereotypes are included in stories that are perceived as objective.

However, it is not complete to discuss feminist analysis without examining its binary opposite, patriarchy to be discussed next.

3.4 Patriarchy

Beasley (2005:11) observes that “binary opposite” simply means “the opposite sex”. It is therefore not possible to discuss feminism in isolation of its opposite. Antrobus (2004:167) argues that patriarchy is a system that glorifies domination, control, violence, competitiveness and greed. Amadiume (1997:101) contends that the imperialistic patriarchy carries a masculinity which celebrates violence, valour, conquest and power. Amadiume further argues that Western patriarchy is different from African patriarchy:

“Patriarchy and matriarchy are social and political ideologies which directly decide the role and status of women in society; how society is to be organised and how social subjects are to relate to one another. They are also ideologies which decide the degree of violence and abuse of human rights that is permissible in society. Matriarchy as was constructed by African women had a very clear message about social and economic justice.”

The traditional patriarchy operated in opposition to the matriarchal system, although both systems were in co-operation and shared social space (Amadiume, 1997:196). Foucault

(1978:141) argues that there is a link between sex and power. Power refers to a capacity to gain the compliance of another, even against their will (McQuail, 2010:566). Gallagher (2010:iii) observes that this “mirror of the world” depicted by the global news media show that the faces seen and the voices heard remain overwhelmingly those of men. In light of this Sesanti (2009:208) warns that unless or until women are given access to the media to express themselves freely, the struggle against the violation of women’s rights will continue to be constrained. Along these lines, the IFJ acknowledges that as long as media ignores ethics and values, “the act of journalism as public good” is threatened (Gallagher, 2010:iv). The IFJ argues that “[f]air gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty”. The tendency to ignore women or – at best – to talk about, rather than to or through women, in the media, is thus deeply embedded in normative cultural practices, and therefore in newsgathering and general production routines (Gallagher, 2010:iii). Gallagher further opines that these practices and routines are extremely difficult, but not impossible, to change.

The first Global Media Monitoring Project in 1995 surveyed how print and electronic media in 71 countries portrayed gender (Gallagher, 2010:vii). This is in contrast to early feminist media scholarship which focused mainly on white middle class gender politics while that of working class and black women was virtually absent (Valdivia & Projansky, 2009:276). There is therefore need for more scholarship on women and the media because as Okello-Orlale (2006:49) observes, in Africa the mass media still sideline women’s issues. The media is still dominated by men and male values, and stereotype women through content and images (Okello-Orlale, 2006:54). What Okello-Orlale raises gives weight to the objectives of the Protocol which seeks to further the development of women through the media.

The socialist feminist theory is discussed next.

3.5 Socialist Feminist Theory

Socialist feminism differs slightly from the Marxist theory of feminism because it argues that there is more to women’s oppression than just the vagaries of capitalism (Fourie, 2009:310). The argument by socialist feminists is that even in societies where capitalism is absent women are still oppressed. Socialist feminists therefore believe that power relations of the class structure in capitalist economies combine with the force of patriarchy to create and maintain male oppression of women (Cockburn, 1990:86). Hartman (1981:12) contends that

capitalism puts men in control of both women's labour in the household and at the workplace. Rahman and Witz (2003:249) further postulate that "[w]ithin the parameter of the Marxist historical materialism, the material was treated as largely synonymous with the economic". Rahman and Witz further argue that the move to expand the meaning of the concept of the material beyond the economic was important and influential and served to challenge the assumption that the material dimensions of women's oppression were synonymous with economic relations. The definition of the material to include the economic was to encompass social relations practices within the household and expanded the concept of the material in a bid to capture a range of everyday and institutional practices that previously fell outside the scope of conventional materialist analyses.

The media is said to have male-dominated media organisational structures which are viewed as so powerful that they militate against ideas and pressures that might lead to any significant transformation (Moore, 1988:144; Gallagher 2010:iii). Moore further argues that in such a male-dominated media system issues of interest to men dominate the media and are seen from male perspectives. The male-dominated media structures ensure an "in-built" censorship against women (Dickey & Chester, 1988:6). The absence of women's voices in the media also means negative images about women sometimes go unchallenged and are taken as the norm. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development aims to correct that.

Gallagher (2010:iii) describes the missing voices of women in the media as "discrimination of the right to freedom of expression" not only in Africa but world-wide. Gallagher further observes that under-representation, insufficient media coverage and the prevalence of stereotypical information are obstacles to the equal enjoyment of freedom of expression. To change that the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing recommended measures that must be taken to improve media and the coverage and representation of women (IFJ, 2009:ii). This culminated in among others in the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Antrobus (2004:12) notes that there is need for the women's global movement to look at the "larger social project" that is concerned with locating gender inequality within other forms of inequality, which is what the socialist feminism theory seeks to do. Antrobus further argues that the larger project aims to address oppressive relationships and not simply seek a better place for women within existing institutions and structures. It has already been established in this chapter that the media is one of those structures where inequality exists. Yet, as already earlier mentioned in this chapter, there is a perception in the post-feminism era—in which this study is located in, that feminism no longer exists (Mendes,

2012:555). Mendes further points out that there is a proclamation that feminism is dead and 1982 is used as the end point when feminism moved from the media's spotlight because “we live in a post-feminist period”.

Mendes's research from 1968 to 1982 in Europe and North America further shows a decline in news reports of feminist activism during that period. This includes stories, features, letters or columns which focused on marches, protests, petitions, conferences, sit-ins, debates, lobbying and boycotts, among others (Mendes, 2012:559). The decline in reports also includes stories on “softer” issues, such as women's fashion, leisure and popular culture (Mendes, 2012:560). The research further reveals that in both Britain and the US feminism has become constructed as something deeply individual and personal and often conducted independent of others (Mendes, 2012:559).

But in Africa, where this study is located, a different situation about women prevails since the margin of inequities is still big, even with equality laws in place. For example in South Africa's mass media there are only 38 percent of women directors, 35 percent in senior management and 25 percent in top management (Glass Ceilings South Africa, 2009:3). Research in South Africa shows that women reporters were more likely to consult female sources (Lowe Morna & Jambaya-Nyakujarah, 2011:279). This research is supported by Mendes (2011:28) who cites other scholars such as Kahn and Goldenberg who examined press coverage of US female candidates for the US senate in 1984 and 1986. These scholars noted that female reporters covered female candidates more and discussed more female issues than men. Women therefore possessed a “woman view” which made them want to interview other women.

The socialist feminist theory is therefore still a relevant tool to analyse the media particularly in Africa, “because it has a broader based intellectual framework focusing on the interaction between gender, class and ideology” (Newbold, 1997:389). Newbold states that this is unlike liberal feminists who look for piecemeal remedies that do not challenge the fundamental structure of society, and radical feminists who consider society as construction of patriarchy (Shepard, 2005:23). The researcher did not use the radical feminist theory because it ignores the economic foundations of women's historic exploitation and oppression (Radical feminists manifesto, 2001:39). The Radical Feminist Manifesto further contends radical feminists claim no economic system can guarantee equality for women because no economic system can guarantee changes in the attitudes and culture of male chauvinism. The

Radical Feminist Manifesto further states that radical feminist theory ignores the historical fact that women have always been more adaptable and more capable to survive than men, particularly in Africa where women have always been a productive labour force.

Studies such as this one are also important because the Second Wave, particularly Friedan's *Mystique*, did not analyse concepts such as race and class. The Third Wave is the stage when debate about interlocking oppression heightened up. Interlocking oppression is when women are further oppressed because of class, race or sexuality (Yeatman, 1995:53). The issue of class and race was a concern for this study which was keen to find out if these issues did in any way affect the way female politicians were covered and represented in the themes under review in line with the socialist feminist theory which seeks equality. For example, Rabe (in Retief, 2010:197) notes that black women are invisible in news except when it is about disasters or extreme violence against women. The use of the socialist feminist theory was on the whole inspired by what Mendes (2011:42) asserts as its "ability to focus specifically on patriarchal, capitalist, racist and heterosexist ideologies". Heterosexist refers to "a reasoned system of bias regarding sexual orientation" (Jung & Smith, 1993:13).

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with the theoretical framework which the researcher used for the study. The feminist theory, and in particular the socialist feminist theory, was selected for its ability to include other factors that further oppress women such as race and class. The chapter showed a historical link of the feminist theory with the media and highlighted some of the controversies surrounding feminism both from a Western and African perspective. It also pinpointed the shortcomings of the media in contributing effectively to the feminism struggle globally and the efforts being made to correct that. The next chapter will discuss the research design and methodology.

Chapter 4

Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The central research question of this study is: Did the media coverage and representation of female politicians by the *Mail&Guardian* between 2010 and 2011 meet the media requirements on content of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development?

This question will help to answer the following questions:

- How much coverage was given to female politicians in stories about gender-based violence against women?
- How were women represented in these news reports?
- Did the stories about the female politicians reinforce gender oppression and stereotypes?
- Did race, class, culture and language affect the way the female politicians were covered or represented in news reports?
- What was the newspaper's staff understanding of the media provisions of The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development?
- Did the Protocol influence the selection of news and the way the newspaper represented female politicians?
- Did the newspaper have a gender policy or did specific reporters, covering the gender beat have a gender policy?
- What was the newspaper's ownership and management structure during the research period?
- Did the structure affect the way news was selected and processed?

In order to answer research questions, there is need to select an appropriate research design (Mouton, 2009:55). Before discussing the research design, it is important to define "research". Research is a scientific way of knowing the truth (Du Plooy, 2009:18). Its purpose is to provide an objective, unbiased collection and evaluation of data (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:14). It is a knowledge-seeking process that helps to shape the world (Waldby, 1995:15). There is often confusion, however, with epistemologies, theories of knowledge and research methods, which are the actual tools used to conduct research

(Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:199). From a gender perspective, some researchers have noted that “traditional” methodologies, epistemologies, and methods have been biased against women (Van Zoonen, 1994:14).

Van Zoonen further fears that male-biased experiences extended in academic knowledge is presented as having universal validity. Van Zoonen further critiques masculine hegemony for lack of female experience in knowledge research, noting that it denies the validity of women’s ways of knowing. Waldby (1995:15) adds that academic knowledge on feminist experience will not just challenge the everyday practices that disadvantage women but also the knowledge which informs these practices and which often work to make women’s disadvantages seem natural and inevitable even to women themselves. Waldby further criticises what she defines as a “simple reversal process” which was common during the 1970s scholarship and which she argues still exists even now. Waldby (1995:16; 17) argues that universities accommodate feminist knowledge as a special interest group without disrupting the university disciplines’ valorisation of masculine activity as a universal significant:

“First it assumes that experience, particularly women’s experience of oppression, is radically distinct from academic disciplinary knowledge and works as its automatic critique. Secondly the reversal strategy assumes that the apparatuses of knowledge production are neutral epistemological machines that men simply use to make knowledge whose content is sympathetic to their interest. If this were the case, the methods of knowledge, its rules and procedures, would be as useful for the representation of women’s experience as for men’s.”

Waldby further concludes that such assumptions she spelt out above have motivated contemporary feminist research, based on the proposition that the valorisation of masculine experience occurs not just through content but is located in the process of production of knowledge itself. Waldby further argues that if feminist knowledge is to be brought into existence, women must find ways to make knowledge differently.

This is not to mean that any one specific method or combination of methods will necessarily make research feminist, but the research must be considerate of the multifaceted nature of gender (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:199). Beetham and Demetriades further note that what is critical is the research approach or framework because what matters is using

methods that help best answer research questions. Beetham and Demetriades further observe that it is essential for a researcher focusing on feminist analysis to use diverse tools and angles to dismantle power relations that exist between men and women. This brings the researcher to discuss research design.

4.2 Research Design

A research design refers to a plan or blueprint of how a study will be conducted (Mouton, 2009:55). The research design determines what kind of study one is doing and helps the researcher to choose the methods and techniques to collect, analyse and interpret data to best answer questions that have been formulated (Du Plooy, 2009:51).

There exists a number of research designs: survey (where a researcher interviews a large group of people using standard questions); experiment (an artificially controlled situation to study a phenomena); ethnography studies (field research, where data are collected by a researcher who participates with subjects over an extended period); the case study where a researcher systematically investigates individuals, groups, organisations or events (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:140; Du Plooy, 2009:30;52;182). The case study is accomplished primarily through intensive observation, information obtained from informants, and informal interviews (Shepard, 2005:49).

The case study is deemed best suited for this research because of its capacity to allow investigations within a real-life context (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:141). This was achieved by interviewing journalists and editors at the newspaper under review and by analysing content. The real-life context is difficult to achieve in other research design types such as the experiment because it separates a phenomenon from its real life context (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:141). Wimmer and Dominick further observe that this inability to accommodate real-life context extends to the laboratory environment, which tends to control the context while the survey tries to define the phenomenon under study narrowly enough to limit the number of variables examined. A case study is useful as a longitudinal study, meaning that data is collected at different points over a long period of time such as two years (Du Plooy, 2009:181). Du Plooy notes that a longitudinal study enables a researcher to adequately investigate people's experiences.

A research design therefore focuses on the end product such as what kind of study is being planned and what kind of result is aimed at (Mouton, 2009:56). Wimmer and Dominick

(2011:141) note that this final product is a detailed description which helps people to understand what is being studied. Wimmer and Dominick further describe the process of helping to understand as heuristic. They further note that the heuristic process “enables new interpretations, new perspectives, new meaning and fresh sights,” which is what this study strove to do. Wimmer and Dominick further observe that the case study is inductive, meaning principles and generalisations emerge from an examination of the data. The term inductive will be discussed in the methodology section which the researcher will focus on next.

4.3 Research Methodologies

Methodology is defined as a research strategy (Du Plooy, 2009:21). It deals with the question of “how” to do research (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:117). Different methodologies are associated with different paradigms which will be defined next.

4.3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies

Quantitative research methodology is also known as “positivistic” research because it is systematic, objective and quantified (Du Plooy, 2009:214). Du Plooy further notes that the meaning of quantitative research is interpreted in the context in which the research problem originated. As a result of a critique that this methodology did not deal with abstract meaning, an alternative research paradigm, the qualitative research methodology emerged. In qualitative research meanings are viewed as constructed and messages decoded according to the social situation and the interests of the audience (McQuail, 2010:67).

Wimmer and Dominick (2011:50) observe that the difference between the two research paradigms lie mainly in the questioning. The quantitative research methodology uses standard questions while the qualitative uses flexible questioning. Other differences include the way data is collected and analysed. The quantitative method uses mostly the survey method. In surveys changes are not practical once the research is in progress. Because of this, field studies may produce insights and explanations not likely to be unearthed by quantitative research (Shepard, 2005:50). The quantitative also analyses data numerically and uses the deductive reasoning to interpret data (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:119). Wimmer and Dominick further note that the deductive reasoning uses an assumption or hypothesis which can be confirmed or rejected.

In contrast, the qualitative data is inductively analysed. This means that relevant data is collected and grouped into appropriate and meaningful categories. Reasoning or explanations

emerge from the data (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:86-87; Priest, 2010:8). Inductive reasoning aims to get meaning through experiences of different research participants (Du Plooy, 2009: 33). Wimmer and Dominick further observe that the inductive reasoning in the qualitative approach may be obtained through in-depth interviews or content analysis and the outcome is presented in a descriptive form.

The qualitative approach uses small representatives of the target population compared to the quantitative because it is more concerned with getting deeper meaning (Mouton, 2009:148). The results cannot be replicated as is the case in the quantitative method (Pitney & Parker, 2009:6). The results obtained are therefore specific to the targeted subject or population. Wimmer and Dominick (2011:116) support this view and sum it up by noting that whereas the positivist paradigm offers “generalisation” and “breadth”, the interpretative research, which is associated with the qualitative research approach, offers a “unique explanation” and “depth” about a given situation. The qualitative approach was also described “interpretative research” because of its ability to help give an understanding of how people create meaning and interpret the events of their world (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:115).

Apart from enabling the researcher to gain in-depth insights, the qualitative research method helps to give meaning to abstract ideas and values, which is difficult to achieve with the quantitative method (Mouton, 2009:148; Du Plooy, 2009:40). For example, the essence of this study is to find out how women politicians were given a voice since the Protocol is concerned with achieving gender equity in news content. But empowerment is abstract because it is not something one can physically touch and therefore measuring it only from a quantitative research approach may not yield adequate results (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:200). To this end, Beetham and Demetriades further draw attention to what they call several commonly agreed upon characteristics of research methodologies using a gender perspective. These are:

- Consideration of the hierarchical power relations between men and women that tend to disadvantage women throughout the research process.
- Integration of diversity, including the differing ways that race, ethnicity, class, caste, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability, affect gender relations, with special attention to the voices of the marginalised, into all levels of the research process.

- Analysis of the relationships between and among all research parties (including the researcher/s).
- Common use of qualitative methods considered “non-traditional” in the physical and social sciences and in research for development in particular.
- Adaptation of quantitative methods to take into consideration “hard-to-measure” aspects such as women's empowerment, and sensitive items such as gender-based violence.

These characteristics were observed in this study through the triangulation process which the researcher will now discuss.

4.4 Triangulation

Both the qualitative and quantitative methods can be used together in a process called triangulation (Du Plooy, 2009:86). Du Plooy (2009:40) observes that quantitative research is vital for future economic survival of media institutions because of its reliability while qualitative research is important for its ability to give meaning to abstract ideas and values. Beetham and Demetriades (2007:205) note that from a female perspective or Gender and Development (GAD) approach there is need to use both research approaches to build a more accurate picture because “[f]ollowing the principles of the GAD framework means fielding more diverse data that represent the experience of gender in equality”. GAD recognises that gender subordination takes places at many levels, including institutions like the mass media (Beetham & Demetriades, 2007:201). Although this research was not analysed using the GAD principle, this principle cannot be absolutely separated from any feminist research, including this study. The GAD principle shares the same ideals of achieving gender equity in all sectors of the economy, including the mass media. Beetham and Demetriades (2007:201) note that research methodologies that take into account different knowledge and experiences have the ability to work towards sustainable development that benefits both men and women.

Mixed research methods (triangulation) are therefore a sure way to address the multiple dimensions of women's oppression and traditional bias in research (Van Zoonen, 2006:14). Van Zoonen observes that a “female” viewpoint brings a new perspective and a new “microscope” for observation. But Griffin (1980:107) offers a different view, arguing that quantitative methodology is a “patriarchal” measurement which is “artificial” and “abstract”. The other argument is that the quantitative methodology is ideologically linked to

men's desire to dominate, to exert power over people as well as nature. In other words, it is an "exercise in masculinity" (McCormack, 1981:3). Oakley (1998:154) warns against the use of research methods based on in-depth interviewing with selected samples of women only, noting that there is the danger that results will give exactly the same problem as men only samples. There are also claims that qualitative research ignores the fact that it is not completely free from the researcher's values (Sprague & Zimmerman, 1989:74). Triangulation yields very different conclusions and these may be at odds with one another (Oakley, 1998:169). The quantitative methodology however, is given credit for putting the socio-demographic mapping of women's position in place in the Second Wave feminism (Oakley, 1998:170).

"Women's oppression could neither have been demonstrated nor understood without an opportunity to examine their relative positions vis-à-vis men in the labour market, the education, health and welfare systems, political organisations and government, and the private world of the home and domestic relations. The underlying gendering of structural inequalities that occurs in most societies could not be discerned using qualitative methods on their own."

Despite criticism about the different research methodologies, Jayaratne and Stewart (in Beetham & Demetriades, 1991:200), advocating for the triangulation process, note that the collection of sex-disaggregated data is not enough without analysis and an understanding of why there is often a reinforcement of the public's pre-conceived sexist attitudes. Jayaratne and Stewart argue that qualitative methods help in evaluating nuances of many of the social phenomena important to analysis of gender more than any numerical statistics or values. For the reason advanced by Jayaratne and Stewart, this study employed the qualitative analysis to find latent meaning in the news reports about the themes under review. The researcher also used the quantitative method to a lesser extent in order to measure the frequency in which the female politicians were covered in the stories relating to the themes under review.

The research techniques employed are discussed next.

4.5 Research Techniques

4.5.1 In-depth Interviews

Personal interviews, also known as one-on-one, can either use structured questions or unstructured (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:206; Du Plooy, 2009:198). Wimmer and Dominick further observe that structured questions mean that the questions put to the respondents are standardised and are therefore rigid or controlled. Du Plooy (2009:197) defines “standard” as a process of interviewing that uses the same wording. Du Plooy further notes that the interview needs not be face-to-face and there can be minimal interaction between the interviewer and respondent. In some cases respondents need only to cross or check one of the answers and need no written notes. Du Plooy also defines structured questions as questions that are close ended. Close ended questions are those for which a limited pre-determined set of answers is possible, for example, multiple choice questions. Because they are rigid they fail to elicit participants' underlying attitudes and opinions but they make answers easier to quantify and compare (Shepard, 2005:45).

In-depth interviews use unstructured questioning; meaning questions are flexible (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:206). This type of interviewing allows for a face-to-face interaction where an interviewer asks questions and records answers (Du Plooy, 2009:199; Shepard, 2005:49). Respondents have an opportunity to respond to questions in their own words, give own opinion, experiences and express feelings. Unstructured interviews may be time-consuming in arranging, getting data and analysing, but they have the advantage of bringing out insight and depth to the topic being researched (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:207). In-depth interviews therefore provide a “wealth of detail” and provide “more accurate responses on sensitive issues” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:139). They also allow for lengthy observation of the people being interviewed and they allow for questions to be customised to individuals (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:139). In such cases research results are usually exploratory or descriptive (Du Plooy, 2009:199).

This study utilised the in-depth interview using standard questions as a guide. The researcher had an opportunity to ask follow-up questions and observe non-verbal responses (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:206; Du Plooy, 2009:199). These were included in the analysis of findings. The reason for using in-depth interviews was linked to the research design, the

case study, and the qualitative research approach which the researcher used for this study. Both the case study design and the qualitative approach are both concerned with getting in-depth and insight in meaning. The researcher interviewed both male and female journalists and editors to get the whole picture and different gender perspectives which Du Plooy (2009:181) describes as the “Gestalt”.

The in-depth interview process was not the only method used to collect data for this study. Wimmer and Dominick (2011:143) suggest that the use of multiple sources of data helps the researcher to improve reliability and validity of the study. The results are more convincing because they contain different perspectives. This study carried out in-depth interviews so that the researcher could compare the results with those obtained from the content analysis, which is discussed next.

4.5.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is defined as a systematic procedure to examine content of recorded information or a method of studying and analysing communication in a systematic objective and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:156). Content analysis in media gained popularity when it was used after the Second World War to study propaganda in newspapers and radio and since then it has been used widely as an efficient tool to analyse media content (Kolmer, 2008:117). Content analysis contributes to a better understanding of the impact of media on society (Kolmer, 2008:118).

The process of content analysis has to meet three requirements. Firstly, content is not selected haphazardly to suit what the researcher wants, but there ought to be consistency in the rules for selection so that “[s]election must follow proper procedures and each item must have an equal chance of being included in the analysis” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:157). The same applies to the evaluation process where “[c]ontent under consideration is to be treated in exactly the same manner” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:157).

Secondly, the process of applying content analysis has got to be objective (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:157). There is no room for the researcher’s bias in the findings. Wimmer and Dominick further note that the analysis should be replicated in another study. There must be clear operational definitions and rules on the classification of variables so that, if the research were to be repeated by someone different, it will yield the same result. If the test of reliability

fails, then results may be questionable. However, Wimmer & Dominick further attest that there is no such thing as perfect objectivity.

“The specification of the unit analysis and the precise make-up and definition of relevant categories are areas in which individual researchers must exercise subjective choice (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:157).

Thirdly, content should be quantitative. Wimmer and Dominick (2011:157) and Kolmer (2008:118) argue that content analysis deals with precision, hence it is defined as quantitative content analysis. But content analysis can also be qualitative. McQuail (2010:363) and Du Plooy (2009:220) note that qualitative content analysis focuses on holistic, selective, illustrative and specific latent meaning. Du Plooy further argues that in such a case the need for a representative sample and treating units of analysis equally are to a certain extent relaxed. Sampling will be defined and discussed later.

In this study, the researcher conducted content analysis to achieve both the quantitative and qualitative results.

The purpose of utilising the qualitative approach was to make sense of the underlying messages around the themes that were investigated. Wimmer and Dominick (2011:122) note that the quantitative approach uses distinct and precise ways to get accurate results, whereas the qualitative approach is more concerned with the description of what was observed. Flick (2000:91) posits that using a combined approach gives more confidence, especially when the description of observed phenomenon accurately depicts what was observed. Credibility is built around the results of the research, but more so when the sampling procedure is clear, which is what is being discussed next.

4.6 Sample

A sample is a subset of the population that is representative of the entire population (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:87; Du Plooy, 2009:108). Wimmer and Dominick note that “representative” is the key word. Du Plooy (2009:108) observes that the term “population” not only refers to people but can also be defined as any group of aggregate of individuals, groups, organisations, social artefacts/objects, such as mass media messages or social interactions, and events. In other words population refers to all possible units of analysis (Du Plooy, 2009:108).

There are three categories of sampling: probability, quasi-probability and non-probability (Stacks & Hocking, 1992:176-188; Watt & Van den Berg, 1995:83-108). Probability sample is defined as: “[a] sample selected that has a probable chance of representing the target population” (Du Plooy, 2009:115). The quasi-probability sample is similar to the probability sample except that the procedure to draw the sample differs as it may contain bias (Du Plooy, 2009:118). Du Plooy further explains that sampling bias means a sampling error because each unit of analysis does not have an equal chance of being selected. A non-probability sample means “[e]very unit in the target population does not have an equal and therefore probable chance of being selected” (Du Plooy, 2009:122). Du Plooy further observes that the researcher controls the choice of units of analysis and a sample frame does not exist. This research intends to use the non-probability sample using a type of a sample known as purposive sample (Du Plooy, 2009:123). This is a relaxed form of sampling in which the researcher uses own judgement in selecting people to be interviewed. This type of sampling was the most appropriate because at times communication researchers sometimes find it difficult to draw a probable sample (Du Plooy, 2009:123). This is due to the following reasons:

- When conducting exploratory research.
- When pre-testing a measuring instrument such as a questionnaire.
- When information about a small sub-group (and not a sample of target population is to be collected.
- When a sampling frame cannot be compiled.
- When the number of units analysis are difficult to obtain.
- When the population is small.

In this study the non-probable sample was appropriate because the research was exploratory. The definition of sample by Kumar (2005:164) is thus interesting:

“The process of selecting a few (a sample) from a bigger group (the sampling population) to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group.”

Other types of non-probability sampling did not apply to the study. For example, the convenience also known as the accidental and the available or opportunity sample which is

drawn from units of analysis that is conveniently available (Du Plooy, 2009:123). Du Plooy further observes that this type of sample is also known as the dipstick sample as a researcher can do a snap survey on a topic among people who happen to be available.

A volunteer sample consists of individuals who volunteer to participate in the study, which was not what happened with this study. Another type is the snowball because participants are asked to apply to take part in a survey to solicit their views. Du Plooy (2009:124) gives an example of readers who may want to volunteer their views about publishing nude photographs in a magazine to which children have easy access to. When they are telephoned they respond and enquire as to whether their family members can also take part in the research.

Sampling for this study was done at a number of levels. The first being the sampling of the *Mail&Guardian* on the basis that the researcher had previous knowledge of the fact that the newspaper had expressed an interest to work with Gender Links, a non-governmental organisation dealing with gender and media, to develop a gender policy (Lowe Morna, et al 2010:134).

Secondly, the time period January 2010 to December 2011 was sample based on the fact that it is midway between the time the Protocol, which is at the centre of the study, was adopted by SADC states in 2008 and the deadline by which all member states should adopt it, which is 2015.

Thirdly, the researcher further selected female politicians as a target population. The news articles selected as part of qualitative and quantitative content analysis were identified using standardised criteria, which will be discussed later when addressing the issue of coding.

Since the *Mail&Guardian* is a weekly newspaper, the researcher selected two issues of the newspaper per month in which news articles reviewed were selected. To eliminate the risk of bias, the researcher further alternated the newspaper issues that were reviewed. For example, the newspaper issues published in the first two weeks of January 2010 were analysed, while those published in the last two weeks in February, 2010 were analysed. This pattern was repeated throughout. In this type of purposive quota sampling the assumption was that alternating the weeks in which the newspaper articles were reviewed was representative enough and limited risk of bias. The researcher reviewed a total of 48 *Mail&Guardian* copies published between January 2010 and December 2011.

In order to achieve objectivity, content analysis is based on rules (Kolmer, 2008:125). A coding scheme is needed to convert the content into analysable data (Du Plooy, 2009:221). Coding is therefore a category system used to classify media content into themes, issues, topics, concepts and propositions in order to investigate manifest or latent content (Babbie, 2002:317; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:165). The study identified news story types that will be analysed. News reports were identified using the media requirements on content of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development spelt out in Chapter 2. In addition to the themes, centrality of women, in the case of this study the female politicians, was used as criteria to select a news story for analysis. Gallagher (2010:28) defines women's centrality in the news as the extent to which women make news in a significant way. Another criterion to select news stories was what Gallagher (2010:33) identifies as stories that challenge stereotypes, including those that overturn common assumptions about women and men in terms of their attributes, traits, roles or occupations. Gallagher further observes that stories that reinforce stereotypes usually re-inscribe the generalised, simplistic and often exaggerated assumptions of masculinity and femininity in a given cultural context.

Overall, the stories were also selected for what Du Plooy (2009:228) describes as a thematic analysis, which consists of a description of the main ideas in messages. This encompassed a triangular test for measuring the extent of gender awareness. Gender-aware reporting means that a journalist must ensure they are not perpetuating stereotypes and must give voice and space to issues affecting women (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:48). Lowe Morna et al further advise that stories must portray women "as having something to offer" and not as "sex objects". The stories should challenge male stereotypes or they should be able to impact both men and women.

Wimmer and Dominick (2011:164) note that in written content, the unit of analysis might be a single word, symbol, a theme or an entire article. In this study content referred to words, meanings, symbols and images. This also included examining language use. Mills (2008:11) notes that sexist language cannot be identified in linguistic terms only. For example, women's experiences of gender-based violence are often trivialised by the media (Lowe Morna et al, 2010:66). Fourie (2008:292) notes that ideology is rooted in language. Thompson (1990:7) notes that meaning is power and therefore there is need to ask why certain words or images are used in particular contexts.

Fourthly, in order to corroborate evidence of the content analysis, a small targeted group of journalists and editors were selected for interviews to answer questions on the experience they had, if any, in writing news identified for review in the study. The researcher drew a purposive quota sample of the list of participants for interviews on the probability that they could have contributed to news articles, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces about female politicians on the selected themes of the study namely gender- based violence, gender oppression and stereotypes.

Nic Dawes, editor of the *Mail&Guardian* at the time was chosen to give the overall perspective of how the newspaper operates.

Rapule Tabane, deputy editor and political editor, to give a male perspective and what role, if any, he played, during the period in question, in covering and representing female politicians.

Tanya Pampalone, features editor, to give a female perspective and what role if any, she played in covering and representing female politicians.

Andisiwe Makinana, parliamentary reporter, to give a female perspective and what role if any, she played, in covering and representing female politicians in her beat.

Drew Forrest, Investigations editor, to give a male perspective and what role if any, he played, in covering and representing female politicians in his beat.

Heidi Swartz, social justice reporter, to share her experience on her beat and coverage of female politicians.

Nikiwe Bikitsha, a columnist, to share her experiences on the coverage and representation of female politicians.

4.7 Ethical Issues

The researcher received consent from the interviewees in accordance with the ethical requirements of Stellenbosch University. All the interviewees, with the exception of Heidi Swartz and Andisiwe Makinana were interviewed face-to-face and also received electronic questionnaires. The researcher audio taped the all face-to-face interviewees using a mobile device. The researcher also recorded notes in a notebook as a backup. Swartz and Makinana gave electronic responses because the researcher was not able to travel to Cape Town where both were resident at the time of the research.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with the processes of executing research. It noted that doing research is a carefully thought through or planned process, as one stage of the process affects another. The chapter defined research and discussed the various types of research designs and how this study fits in. The researcher explained the interrelated processes such as the methods or techniques used to collect data and how this is tied to the research approaches and data analysis. This chapter showed that the use of more than one method or technique as well as research approaches is highly recommended if a researcher aims to get a whole picture of what is being investigated in a process known as triangulation. The two research processes (the traditional quantitative and another one born as a result of a critique of it, qualitative) were both discussed.

The next chapter gives findings of the study.

Chapter 5

Research Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter states the findings of this study. The aim of the study was to ascertain whether or not the *Mail&Guardian* met the media requirements contained in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in their coverage of female parliamentarians. The requirements give the media in SADC countries a 2015 deadline to achieve gender parity in terms of news sources used to produce news, publishing stories that help to eradicate gender-based violence, particularly against women, and to ensure that the media publish stories that do not reinforce women's oppression and stereotypes or promote pornography among women and children.

Two newspaper issues per week were sampled during the study period, totalling 48 copies. The chapter will therefore give findings of interviews first, then content selected from the *Mail&Guardian's* hard news reports, features, editorials, comments and opinion pieces.

5.2. Section One: Interview Reports

Seven journalists and editors working for the *Mail&Guardian* were interviewed to seek their opinions on the coverage and representation of female politicians in line with the stated themes of the study. Four of the interviewees were women, for female perspectives, while the rest were male for male perspectives. Five of the seven interviews were face-to-face in-depth interviews while two were interviewed via the electronic mail system because they were based in Cape Town. All the interviews were conducted in 2013. The interview questions are contained in Appendix 1.

On the newspaper's staff understanding of the media provisions of SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and whether or not it influenced the selection of news and the way the newspaper represented female politicians.

Of the seven journalists and editors interviewed, only two were vaguely aware of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development let alone the media requirements. The rest were completely ignorant of both the Protocol and the media requirements. They were not aware of any work or attempts by the SADC to popularise the Protocol or discuss the media requirements in newsrooms. Nic Dawes (2013), the editor of *Mail&Guardian*, was of the view that in general reporters were not particularly concerned about what bodies such as the

United Nations or SADC say they were doing. Reporters were much more interested in something that was “closer” to them. Tanya Pampalone (2013) noted that even if journalists were aware, what the media requirements were demanding from media would not work because the media had no adequate resources and staff. Drew Forrest (2013) noted that his staff was not aware of the provisions but argued they would be aware of the need to foster gender equity values. Forrest was of the opinion that if the newspaper published material regarded as an attack on women, most cases would end up at the ombudsman.

Nikiwe Bikitsha (2013) noted that although she was not aware of the Protocol in great detail, she was generally aware of a number of women watchdog organisations who encouraged the media to give women a voice and positive representations. Bikitsha argued that whether the media was putting such ideas into practice in the newsrooms remained debatable. Bikitsha further noted that she was inspired to do her stories based on whether they would do justice to women. Her stories were aimed at taking people into account. The objective was to let intelligent women give their voices on topical issues.

Andisiwe Makinana (2013) argued that even though she was ignorant of the media requirements or the Protocol, she was always guided by the journalist’s ethics and standards whenever she wrote her news reports. Heidi Swart (2013) shared the same view postulating: “I find that their content echoes what I already know.” She noted that she reported on female politicians the way she would have on male politicians. As a social justice reporter, she noted, it was her job to highlight injustices.

Dawes pointed out that it was quite possible that the goals that were outlined in the Protocol were the ones his newspaper would have sympathy with and support, but noted that the newspaper “absolutely” did not take its cue in terms of its editorial policy from the SADC or from any other public or private body other than its own values as a news organisation. This was echoed by Pampalone. Dawes stressed that while the newspaper listened to and took people seriously, it would be completely inappropriate to accept a set of rules drawn up by a multilateral regional body like the SADC and accept those as its editorial principles. Dawes stated that it was important to understand that while the newspaper was “quite happy” to be part of a discussion that promoted and drove gender equity, whether it was coverage or in the newsrooms, it was important to manage the line between driving that agenda and intruding on editors’ decisions. Dawes further argued that editors did not report to the SADC, but to their readers and community. His opinion was that the SADC should play a role of

promotion, of enabling and encouragement, but should not bind independent media to rules. Tabane Rapule (2013) asserted that news gathering in his political news department was not influenced by gender but by what was deemed newsworthy by the department. This was determined through diary meetings and reviewing each week's issue of the newspaper and other newspapers.

On the coverage given to female politicians in stories about violence against women and how the women were represented in these news articles.

The journalists and editors expressed mixed feelings on this issue. Dawes observed that in general the view on gender at the newspaper was one that sought to advance the progressive roles that women play in society. A progressive approach meant dealing with sexual violence in a way that tried to lift it out of the "quite reductive and stereotype reporting". Dawes argued that his newspaper tried to ensure that women's voices came out very strongly. At the same time, the newspapers ensured that survivors of violence were not subjected to the kind of scrutiny that could replicate trauma and intrusion unless it was very clear the women were ready or felt very strongly talking about it. Dawes pointed out that his newspaper ensured that voices of women and the voices of survivors were heard in stories about sexual violence, but at the same time the newspaper did not want to intrude on the privacy and dignity of survivors of violence. Dawes further noted that the newspaper tried not to "impose trauma" on women in its coverage of gender-based violence. Pampalone gave a different picture. Pampalone pointed out that while some workshops had been held between the newspaper's journalists and gender activists leading to a six part series of stories on rape in South Africa, it ended there. After that, gender-based violence stories featured mostly on special days such as the 16 days of activism against violence against women and in advertisements that came from the gender community. Pampalone did not believe the newspaper was doing much because of staff and resources shortage as well as lack of commitment to writing about women in general.

While believing that the newspaper was progressive and concerned about human rights, Rapule could not remember the last time he wrote or the newspaper had written a story, on gender-based violence or about a female politician. The period that starkly stood out to him as far as gender-based violence, reporting in the *Mail&Guardian* was concerned, was when his newspaper reported about President Jacob Zuma and his rape trial, which was

outside the reviewed period. After that he admitted that gender-based violence news coverage remained “more of an accident rather than deliberate”.

Dawes asserted that from his own experience as a parliamentary reporter years ago, journalists tended to want to speak to “a cadre of star parliamentarians who were confident in English and who gave them good quotes”. These parliamentarians attracted most of the attention in Parliament and were skilled at building their media profile. Dawes believed that such calibre of parliamentarians usually sought out journalists and journalists sought them out. Journalists were often reluctant to speak to the less confident legislators, who were anxious of the media and “don’t know how to take advantage of the media because they don’t believe they will get good stories out of them”. Dawes observed that one of the difficulties was that “unfortunately the ministry that deals with women’s issues is a poorly performing ministry”. Dawes believed most of the momentum on these issues came from the “strong civil society”. Rapule noted that some of the female politicians had decided to “boycott” the media because they said the media always reported negatively about them.

Forrest, who worked on the investigations unit called *amaBhungane* pointed out that his department was driven by the news agenda rather than the gender agenda. *AmaBhungane* had a contractual agreement to provide investigative stories to the *Mail&Guardian* since about 2010. Forrest did not recall his department doing investigative stories around gender-based violence but remembered his department covering an investigative story involving a female politician, Tina Joemat-Peterson’s deal in which she pushed for the import of antelope for a company linked to an aide’s partner. Forrest’s defence for not investigating gender-based violence stories was that the department was still small and did not cover as many socio-economic issues as it wanted to. The department concentrated on corruption in both the public and private sector while gender-based violence stories were left to the newspaper’s news department.

Makinana shared the same view with Forrest when she pointed out that her news agenda was not driven by gender but by news values. Her work entailed covering parliament. This included coverage of bills, public hearings and parliamentary debates. She therefore did not give specific coverage to female politicians during that period. Bikitsha noted that although her column focused on young black women she did extensive coverage of female politicians, particularly their political struggles.

Swart was the only journalist who attempted to link gender-based violence with female politicians. She observed that while in some instances she was wrong by not getting comments from female politicians, in cases where she did, she found the female politicians failing to articulate the position of women. She cited Angie Motshekga in an article she had written about rape in the rural areas:

“As head of the ANC women’s league, the article assumed that she had an important role to play in the prevention of rape. However, my findings were, despite their press officer stating to the contrary, that minister Motshekga was indeed willing to place the needs of male politicians (and her own political needs) above the safety of women.”

In another rape story in which Swart spoke to Lulu Xingwana when she was Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Swart argued that Xingwana had failed to convince her she had the rights of women at heart. Swart also gave an example of an article she wrote on the Minister of Social Welfare development, Bathabile Dlamini, accusing her of not being able to fund social welfare organisations working with children, the aged and other vulnerable groups. Swart argued that the minister had failed to give her satisfactory answers on how she had assessed the needs of vulnerable groups and did not appear to have lobbied for finances with treasury.

On whether stories about the female politicians reinforced gender oppression and stereotypes.

Dawes pointed out that after the newspaper ran an extensive series of workshops on reporting about rape, there was an improvement on sexual violence reporting. Dawes argued that the objective of the workshops were for the newspaper journalists to write about gender-based violence in a non-stereotypic way. Tabane strongly believed that when the newspaper did report on gender-based violence or female politicians there was a great deal of sensitivity and consciousness not to victimise women that had already been victimised by society.

Pampalone argued that there were many women going unrecognised. Forrest was of the opinion that even if they covered socio-economic issues it was unethical and wrong to reinforce gender stereotypes or gender oppression. He further argued that it was against the editorial policy of the newspaper. His department’s job was to investigate anybody in the public interest. Bikitsa argued that the motivation to start her column was partly to challenge

stereotypes against women and the need to interrogate the discrimination that women reinforce amongst each other. Bikitsa postulated that women tended to hold each other to the same patriarchal standards. Swart believed all her articles had been carefully researched and that her reports confirmed the stereotypes that women were often associated with, such as incompetence. However, surprisingly to her, she had observed that male politicians were no better as they “came across as equally incompetent, uncaring and disconnected from their constituencies”.

On race, class/culture and language and the way these affected the way the female politicians were covered or represented in the articles.

Journalists and editors interviewed said they were guided by news values rather than class or race when they spoke to female politicians. Hence Naledi Pandor, Hellen Zille and Lindiwe Mazibuko got more news coverage than unknown female parliamentarians. Rapule argued that news took precedence before gender. Pampalone agreed with this view. She postulated that there were some politicians that people took notice of, who were “talented, bright and could convey messages in a powerful way”, those that provided the “dog bites man coverage” that people wanted to read about. Makinana differed with this view slightly, observing that she never picked any race, as she was led by events of parliament. Swart concurred, arguing that she exercised objectivity in her reporting. Swart, however, noted that most of her interviews involved female ministers from a disadvantaged social class and from different tribal backgrounds.

“The views I portrayed were their views. By and large class was the biggest issue that filtered through as a theme in the stories. Although the female politicians I interviewed did not say so, the testimony of their horrific experiences did imply rich female politicians have abandoned poor and disadvantaged women.”

But Forrest argued that it was inevitable that in some cases black people were given more coverage such as the case in government where the majority were predominantly black. Forrest further argued that when it came to the private sector where most whites worked, the picture was different. In the case of Forrest’s investigation department the underlying guideline was whether there was evidence of wrongdoing.

Bikitsha offered a different view, arguing that she did not pretend to speak for everyone in her column. Bikitsha noted that her topics were influenced by biases of her own socialisation, which was the black middle class background that she belonged to. Bikitsha stated that her column was particularly aimed at giving voice to young black women in a democratic cosmopolitan society and to articulate their challenges, which included sexual violence, representations of women in the media and discrimination.

Gender Policy

Journalists and editors were not sure if there was a gender policy. Dawes was not certain it existed:

“I don’t think we have a firm gender policy. I don’t think we have a complete set. What we have are ideas. On hiring we have some sort of gender policy, but not on coverage.”

Pampalone was certain there was no policy on how women should be covered, but knew that on hiring women “there was some kind of policy”. Other journalists were not sure and noted that if it existed they were not aware of it.

Gender Beat

Forrest argued he would rather all his reporters understood gender. This view was shared by Makinana and Tabane. Forrest argued that a gender beat was not beneficial. He postulated that it was easier for various beats such as politics, health and features to cover women. He further asserted that it was not enough to write about gender but it had to be newsworthy otherwise people would not read it. Bikitsha shared the same sentiments. She argued that gender was about balancing power relations between men and women. In her opinion such a beat would be counter effective. She believed editors should ensure there was gender awareness among journalists because women’s issues cut across all issues. She advised that editors should educate writers about their policies. Bikitsha was, however, concerned that few women wrote on any issue.

Pampalone differed, arguing that the reason that there was no gender beat was there were not more women in the newsroom to do that. For example, there were no women in the core general news team. However, the business team was all women while the politics team was split into half. The woman who oversaw the feature’s desk had no features writer under

her. Pampalone believed having more women to cover women's issues helped because women responded differently to different things and had different sensibilities and perspectives. Pampalone argued that women came up with unique angles that men did not see. Pampalone observed that there was need to cover women differently, in a way that appealed to the younger generation of women who were in the majority. She did not agree with those who felt women should be covered in a special way on Women's Day because she argued it did not make a difference. Pampalone further argued it was wrong for newspapers to dedicated space on women's issues. She observed that in most cases these decisions were made by men and women in the newsroom were not asked for their opinion. Pampalone observed that the reality was that most women wanted to read women's issues inside the main newspaper and not to have their own dedicated space which she believed was a waste of resources. Swart agreed with Pampalone and admitted to have put gender at the centre of her work because she was a social justice reporter. Swart, however, noted that if she had not deliberately pursued such a beat she would have not written as many stories on gender as she did.

On the newspaper's ownership and management structure.

Dawes pointed out that there were two female directors out of eight. There was however an almost equal number of females and males in the management structure of the organisation. However, in the editorial decision-making structure women were outnumbered and occupied lower positions of features, health and associate financial editors. The males occupied the offices of chief editor, deputy chief editor, associate editor, news editor, financial editor, and political editor. There were no female black editors.

On whether the structure affected the way news was selected and processed.

Dawes argued that the organisation's management structure and ownership did not affect editorial content because they did not have a say on editorial matters. Dawes was of the opinion that it was too simplistic to think that the lack of women at the decision-making level in media organisations resulted in fewer female sources and fewer stories on interesting and important women. He believed the responsibility was distributed because there was a wide level of structural inequity that persisted in society. Dawes noted many organisations put men in frontline positions such as communication. Dawes argued that even when one went to a village to discuss an issue, male relatives spoke on behalf of women. Dawes further argued that this was the context which journalists operated in, a reality which journalists tried to

break. Dawes further criticised the counting of sources as demanded in the media requirements of the Protocol, describing it as a limited understanding of the dynamics in gender and how the media worked. Dawes argued that what was needed instead, were tools to deal differently with women.

Makinana did not think having women on decision-making levels had any impact on her work. Makinana was not aware of the exact composition of the management structure stationed in Johannesburg because she was based in Cape Town, but observed that none of them had ever interfered in her work. Rapule suggested there should be more commitment by the newspaper to covering female issues.

But Forrest and Pampalone believed having women at the decision-making level made a difference. Drew argued that women would object to something offensive being carried out in the newspaper. Pampalone, who participated in editorial decision-making at the *Mail&Guardian*, pointed out that it was frustrating to have few women at editorship level. Pampalone observed that patriarchy was so “thick” in the newsroom and described her newsroom as “testosterone based”. Pampalone further observed that such an environment was detrimental to the newspaper. Swart agreed. Swart was of the opinion that the *Mail&Guardian* was a newspaper “for men by men”, where coverage of male politicians was prioritised. In addition, she noted that the *Mail&Guardian* is dominated “by white men who conceive and generate news”. She noted that there were no black women in the editorial structure.

Pampalone believed the newspaper could have more women readers if it paid attention to things that women in the newsroom said they wanted to read which got “shot down” by men in senior management. Pampalone also noted that it would be interesting to see if the tone about women’s coverage changed if a woman “ran the show” at the newspaper. She believed that the only way there would be a shift in the newsrooms was when men took a step back and gave women in the newsroom a chance to speak. She observed that women in the newsrooms who were vocal were labelled “aggressive and emotional” and their opinions were dismissed. Pampalone argued that such “vocal women” turned out to be aggressive and emotional because they were not being heard because the men just did not want to. Bikitsha concurred, pointing out that, in principle, having women in ownership or decision-making structures was a good idea because being in a position of power helped one to make decisions and demands. Bikitsha argued that in practice having

women in ownership and management structures did not work out the way it should be because sometimes women in positions of power failed to make a difference. Bikitsha asserted that the inability to cause change by these women sometimes had to do with whether they had enough support to push the agenda they wanted. Pampalone argued such support was not there.

Next to be discussed are findings on content of the *Mail&Guardian*.

5.3 Section Two: Findings on Content

The researcher presents findings thematically and according to the research questions. The findings are presented according to the type of news reports. The gender-based violence theme and how female politicians were covered and presented are presented first while the findings of the theme of gender oppression and stereotypes will be presented second. The researcher examined news reports, comments and opinion pieces, features and editorials. The editorials will be referenced as “*Mail&Guardian* comment” because they did not have by-lines and news reports with anonymous reporters are also referenced as such. The researcher now presents the findings on the theme of gender-based violence.

5.3.1 Gender-based Violence

On the coverage of women politicians:

News Reports

Female politicians’ voices were missing in stories about gender-based violence no matter how shocking the news was except for one. The only news report linking a female politician to gender-based violence involved Hellen Zille, the leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA) (Underhill, 2010:08). Zille was asked why she attacked President Jacob Zuma’s love affairs and not her own minister, Lennit Max, who was facing sex abuse allegations.

However, other gender-based violence stories had no female politicians’ voices. One of these news reports was the rape of female patients by a male doctor at a municipal clinic in Limpopo (Sosibo, 2011:16). The trauma centres where the raped women were referred to were under-funded and under-staffed and therefore faced the threat of closure. The news report further stated that between 2009 and 2010, 3 618 victims of sexual assault and domestic abuse passed through one of the trauma centres. The news report also noted that the province witnessed an average 5000 sex crimes each year.

Female politicians also were not quoted on the news story involving the rape of girls in schools. Harbour (2010:16) reported that 34 percent of learners experienced sex harassment and sex abuse at school while another 14 percent were sexually harassed by educators. Furthermore, Harbour explained that violence had a disruptive effect on the girls' schooling as some of them ended up dropping out of school. Others "suffered in silence". Harbour further reported that the solution lay in the political will yet female politicians' voices were absent. The news report: "We are a nation crying out for help" indicated that about half of the women in Gauteng had experienced some form of violence, with 80 percent of men having admitted to perpetrating violence (Seekoei & Steyn, 2010:22).

Female politicians' voices were also missing in the news story revealing a decline in murder cases but a rise in sex offences (Underhill & McDermot, 2011:08). The number of reported rapes had increased from 55 097 to 56 272 during the 2010 to 2011 period. Female politicians' voices continued to be absent even in stories referring to parliamentary bills aimed at curbing violence against women. For example, a news report on the Muslim Marriage Bill highlighted how Muslim women married under polygamy suffered abuse (Rawoot, 2011:18). The bill was aimed at helping wives to get access to maintenance or inheritance. In the news report on pornography, a male deputy minister of Home Affairs, Malusi Gigaba, stated that he was on a war path with the pornography stores and working to fast track a law that would compel internet and cell phone pornography providers to filter content (Krause, 2010:18-19).

Other news reports where female politicians' voices were missing included the news report on marital rape involving Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng (Rawoot, 2011:04). Mogoeng was Zuma's choice as constitutional court justice and was being accused of downplaying domestic violence in a number of cases. Rawoot further reported that in one appeal heard in 2007, Mogoeng suspended a convicted rapist's two-year jail sentence on the grounds that he had been aroused "by his wife" and had used "minimum force". This is despite the fact that the man had "throttled his wife and pinned her to the bed to have sexual intercourse with her". Another was the news report that stated that about 10 lesbians were raped each week in Cape Town alone (Underhill, 2011:20).

Female politicians did not comment on a feature news report on South Africa's growing pornography (Krause, 2010:18-19). Krause's news article was based on South Africa's first all-black adult feature film, whose demand the newspaper claimed was high.

Krause quoted an editor of a pornography magazine, *Homegrown talent*, Rilete Meyer, stating that local pornography content was in high demand.

Again no female politicians were quoted when a male politician, Fikile Mbalula, was accused of impregnating his girlfriend and forcing her to abort the foetus (McKaiser, 2011: 32). The female politicians' voices were also missing in a news report which quoted a male organisation accusing women of abusing men in what the men described as "South Africa's hidden crime" (Matsha, 2011:33).

Features, Editorials, Comments and Opinion Pieces

There were no features linking gender-based violence with female politicians. Although editorials were written on gender-based violence, again none had a link with female politicians. There were also no comments and opinion pieces linking female politicians and gender-based violence.

On whether class, culture and language affected the way female politicians were covered.

The question of how class, culture or language affected how women politicians were covered or represented was not an issue because women politicians never spoke on gender-based violence, except one news report involving Zille already cited above (Underhill, 2010:08).

The next section discusses the second theme of gender oppression and stereotypes.

5.3.2 Gender Oppression and Stereotypes

The researcher now looks at the findings of the theme of gender oppression and stereotypes.

On the coverage of women politicians

News Reports

In quantitative terms, out of 12 news reports dealing with this theme, nine related to controversies relating to female politicians. This included when the female politicians got fired or hired for ministerial jobs, and when they were forced to do things against their will or when they quarrelled among themselves. For example, Yolanda Botha was reported on because she had been fined 30 days salary for not declaring the benefits she received from a property (Faull, 2011:06). She was found guilty of lying about the interests she received from

the sale of property group Tritecta Investment Holdings. In another news report Social Development minister, Edna Molewa, Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Noluthando Mayende-Sibiya, as well as Premier of North West, Maureen Modisele, were reported on because they were about to be fired from their jobs (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:8). A similar news report also speculated on the firing of the same female politicians from their jobs. A new minister had been added to the list of those who were likely to face the axe and this was Minerals Minister Susan Shabangu (Rossouw, 2010: 04). The news report specifically stated that Zuma was targeting to fire women.

Another news report announced a “new look cabinet featuring, three virtually unknowns in full ministerial jobs” (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10). In yet another news report female premier, Thandi Modise was to be replaced by another female politician, Maureen Modise as North West province premier (Mataboge, Rossouw & Letsoalo, 2010:3). Still on the subject of controversy, Premier Nomvula Makonyane, was reported as having been forced to reshuffle her provincial cabinet by the ANC party (Letsoalo & Rossouw, 2010:11). Letsoalo and Rossouw reported that Makonyane was “visibly frustrated” when she announced the cabinet ministers at a press briefing. “The ANC gave me the names and I had to apply my mind where to place the new members.”

Another controversial news report was on the succession war (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10). Rossouw and Mataboge speculated that Sisulu was “clamouring” for the national chairperson position of the ANC. Rossouw and Mataboge further reported that Tokyo Sexwale, former Human Settlements minister, was vying for the vice President’s post, while Kgalema Motlanthe was eyeing the position of President.

Two news reports were about Zille quarrelling with a former female politician, Janet Love (Donnelly, 2010:09); (Donnelly, 2010:08). Donnelly reported that Zille opposed the appointment of Love as South Africa’s Human Rights Commissioner (HRC) because she was ANC’s former member. Love responded in another news report “Love furore just ‘toilet’ politics” (Donnelly, 2010:08). In this news report, Donnelly described the fight between the two women as “toilet” politics. Love was quoted accusing Zille for hitting back at her because the HRC had ruled against the Cape Town City Council’s handling of the Khayelitsha “toilet saga”. Love was again quoted in the same news report remarking that Zille’s efforts in blocking her appointment were “a veil for trivialising really important issues”. Zille was reported as justifying her resistance to Love’s appointment, pointing out

that when the “ANC deploys cadres they are expected to put party interest first”. Zille is quoted remarking that Zuma “said the ANC is more important than the constitution of this country”.

Other news reports included a news report about a former female minister of Public Enterprise, Barbara Hogan (Donnelly, 2010:35). Donnelly reported about how Hogan’s “political shoes were hard to fill”. Donnelly was comparing Hogan to Malusi Gigaba who was about to take up the portfolio that Hogan used to hold.

Another news report was about Sisulu’s profile where she spoke about her plans for the Defence Ministry, including banning unions in the defence sector (Mataboge, 2010:12). Sisulu also spoke about other wide ranging issues including her relationship with her brother, Max, who was Speaker of Parliament. Sisulu was quoted as denying that she took advantage of her brother’s position to get her way in Parliament. Sisulu was also quoted explaining that she did not take advantage of her brother or any other politician, including politicians who are her friends.

Features

There were no feature reports linking women politicians and gender-based violence.

Editorials

Female politicians were often mentioned in editorials when they were being criticised. An editorial (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24) criticised Xingwana for walking out of an exhibition. The editorial reacted to a comment: “Let Lulu do a song and a dance to wow football fans” (Anonymous, 2010:23). The author, an arts practitioner, stated at the end of the comment, “Let Lulu do a song and a dance to wow football fans” that she wished to remain anonymous for writing the comment for fear of jeopardising her chances of getting future funding for her projects from the Department of Arts and Culture. Xingwana was accused in this comment for not releasing programmes and projects for the year. Yet there were only 100 days to go before South Africa hosted the Fifa World Cup.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was condemned in another editorial (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28) for citing that many people who fought for struggle of freedom were dying unrecognised and unrewarded. The editorial accused Madikizela-Mandela of letting

down the nation by her corrupt deeds which included allegations of her taking unauthorised trips, fraud and kidnapping convictions.

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga was blamed for not prioritising her education minister portfolio because she concentrated on her ANC Women's League job where she was president (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). She was compared with Higher Education minister Blade Nzimande, who the editorial argued, was doing a far much better job because he surrounded himself with "high-calibre advisers and officials".

Columns and Opinion Pieces

An opinion piece about Hogan's retirement from government service narrated Hogan's political history such as the way she opposed apartheid through protests she participated in during her university days, the underground work she did for the ANC and Hogan's arrest for treason (Ackmat & Hassan, 2010:27;31). The opinion piece noted that Hogan became the first white woman to be charged for treason. Hogan also became a member of parliament in 1994 and over the years held previously male dominated portfolios, such as heading the finance portfolio in parliament, health ministry before she became Public enterprises minister. Another opinion piece was written by Agriculture minister, Joemat-Pettersson (Joemat-Pettersson, 2010:28). Her opinion was about the role her ministry was playing in improving subsistence farming to increase agricultural production in rural areas.

In another opinion piece, Lulu Xingwana, then Arts and Culture Minister was criticised for not releasing details of the projects and programmes being funded for the Fifa World Cup held in South Africa in 2010 (Anonymous, 2010:23). Another opinion piece speculated about troubles for Lindiwe Mazibuko, now that she was a parliamentary leader (Tabane, 2011:31). The opinion piece analysed comments that had been made about Mazibuko by her DA political party supporters, civic society and politicians. Most of the comments quoted in the news analysis doubted Mazibuko's capacity to deliver and others questioned her "blackness". One of the quotes that illustrate the negative sentiments contained in this news analysis is the one below:

"I very much doubt that Mazibuko will champion the poor over big business. Nor should she?"

Another opinion piece criticised the merger by Zille's DA party with Patricia's de Lille's Independent Democrat (ID) party (McKaiser, 2010:27). McKaiser dismissed the merger,

arguing both politicians had few followers. McKaiser further noted that without an ideological tonal shift, the DA's merger with the ID "will yield small to zero returns". He further argued that the reason the merger would not work was that the DA had handled racism "clumsily" and the ID would lose its pan-Africanist values.

On whether the stories reinforced gender oppression and stereotypes.

News Reports

Although Rossouw and Mataboge (2010:10) reported that Mildred Oliphant and Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde were hired as ministers, they did not quote them. They, however, described the two ministers as "little known" and political "lightweights".

At times the female politicians names were used on front page headline teasers yet they were not quoted in the stories. This was the case in the news report stating Sisulu's intentions to stand for the ANC chairperson position (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10). In another news report Shabangu is mentioned as part of the disciplinary committee that was hearing Julius Malema's charges of misconduct and bringing his ANC party to disrepute. She, however, was not quoted in the news report (Mataboge, 2010:02).

Features

There were no features that reinforced gender oppression and stereotypes.

Editorials, Columns and Opinion Pieces

The right to reply was used by Zille (2010:32) to respond to issues of misrepresentations by the media. Zille claimed she had been misrepresented by the media regarding how her political party was tackling poverty. In the right to reply opinion piece, Zille defended her party's policies on poverty. Zille's right to reply opinion piece was in reaction to an article that had contrasted the DA's and ANC's approaches to dealing with poverty in which her party was accused as having no clear programmes to deal with poverty (Rossouw, 2010:08). Zille, who was quoted extensively by Rossouw, was not satisfied that the article had represented the truth.

Angie Motshekga also used the right to reply to give her opinion on an editorial (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). The editorial accused her of lowering the education standards because she was spending more time doing her ANC job as head of the Women's

League. Giving her opinion in the right to reply article she defended herself on what she had done to improve education (Motshekga, 2010: 42). Motshekga observed that she had ensured needed resources were channelled to schools.

Other opinion pieces were written by Joemat-Pettersson (2010:28) where she described her ministry's role in increasing subsistence farming in rural areas.

On whether class, culture and language affected the way female politicians were represented.

News Reports

Zille gave her opinion when she was accused of sexual abuse in a news report that accused her of protecting a DA minister, Max (Underhill, 2010:8). Zille also spoke out in the squabble with the appointed HRC chair, Love (Donnelly, 2010:9). Sisulu commented on her ministry and succession issues (Mataboge, 2010:12), and Makonyane spoke out about being forced to reshuffle (Rossouw, 2010:11). Yet Modise and Modisile were not quoted in the speculative piece about them jostling for the North West province premiership (Mataboge & Underhill, 2010: 3). Both Oliphant and Mahlangu-Nkabinde were not quoted when the newspaper described them "little known" and political "lightweights" (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10).

Features

There were no features on class, culture and language and female politicians.

Editorials

In the editorials: *Mail&Guardian* Comment (2010:24) and *Mail&Guardian* Comment (2010:28), Xingwana and Madikizela-Mandela were criticised for their beliefs. Xingwana was criticised for walking out of an exhibition because she was offended by images of black women "in erotic embraces". This was because she had demanded for "nation building" art (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). An editorial (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28) blamed Madikizela-Mandela for being "hypocritical", "bitter" and "vindictive" because she "embraces her former husband in front of the cameras, in her heart and when she thinks it is safe to unburden herself, she abuses him". The editorial criticised her for "drawing all South Africans into her private battle with Nelson Mandela Foundation or over who has access to the old man". The editorial further accuses Madikizela-Mandela of praising herself for "keeping the liberation movement alive".

Columns and Opinion Pieces

The alliance between Zille's DA party and Patricia de Lille's ID party was likened to a "marriage of inconvenience" by (McKaiser (2010:27). McKaiser's opinion piece was accompanied by an image of the two female politicians holding tightly to each other and performing a ball-room dance. Both women were dismissed as having fewer followers. The opinion piece stated that De Lille did "not have a massive vote pulling political magnet despite her penchant for bright orange".

5.3.3 Chapter Summary

The chapter was divided into two sections. Findings of interviews were presented first. The findings showed that there were mixed reactions on the reasons behind very little coverage of gender-based violence and female politicians. Journalists displayed ignorance about the media requirements of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. They argued that they were objective in their reporting. They did not approve of having a specific gender beat although there were strong feelings that women would make a difference if they were more involved in decision-making.

The findings of the content analysis on the newspaper were discussed next. They were based on research done on news reports, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces of the *Mail&Guardian* on two themes of gender-based violence and gender oppression and stereotypes. The chapter stated findings of the theme of gender-based violence first. The findings generally showed a lack of a link between the media and women legislators in South Africa. Findings on the theme of gender oppression and stereotypes were presented second. They showed that journalists reinforce gender oppression and stereotypes by putting emphasis on the negative such as scandals, squabbles and being fired. In some cases female politicians were not quoted.

The next session will discuss data analysis.

Chapter 6

Data Analysis

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents largely a qualitative data analysis of this study's findings. However, to a small extent, quantitative data analysis is also given to quantify coverage of female politicians. The analysis covers interviews conducted with journalists and editors of the *Mail&Guardian* on the study's two themes: gender-based violence and women's oppression and stereotypes and how female politicians were covered and represented in the two themes. Analysis also includes content analysis of news reports, features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces of the *Mail&Guardian* in the two themes.

The analysis is based on the socialist feminist theoretical framework and the media requirements on content of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

The researcher will now next summarise the socialist feminist theory and the context of the study.

6.2 Socialist Feminist Theory

Socialist feminism, a branch of the Marxist feminist theory, holds the view that power relations of the class structure in capitalist economies combine with patriarchy to oppress women (Fourie, 2008:309; Cockburn, 1990:86). Socialist feminism identifies culture, language and race as other contributory factors to women's subordination (Carter & Steiner, 2004:347). The media can help to foster inequality between women and men (Mendes, 2011:2; Fourie, 2008:317). Journalists being part of society, hold belief systems, including cultural norms and stereotypes, which may affect the way they interpret news events which may not be "fair", "accurate" or "balanced" (Mendes, 2011:23). The act of giving women a voice is viewed as a political process aimed at achieving social justice (Carter & Steiner, 2004:347).

With that background the researcher focuses next on the analysis of interviews.

6.3 Section One: Interview Analysis

There were contradictions of views for the reasons women politicians were not given a voice in gender-based violence reporting. Although the editor, Dawes, believed his newspaper had a "progressive approach" to gender-based violence reporting, some of his journalists did not agree.

Journalists and editors argued they were colour and class blind and motivated by news values such as prominence. The journalists and editors were correct about prioritising prominence as the content analysis showed that influential politicians such as Zille and Sisulu mostly spoke more than other female politicians. So, the question of class was certainly an issue. Swart observed that ironically the neglected female politicians made good sources because they were concerned about their constituencies more than the outspoken influential type of female politicians.

Not considering news in terms of "male" or "female" may be a good thing. It is what Mills (2008:251) envisages as a vision for the future where it will be possible for women not to be defined according to masculine norms. Other critics interpret the journalists' and editors' gender blind attitude differently. Joseph (2011:40) postulates that such an attitude fails to view news from a "gender lens". Hawks, Mills, Wynhoven and Gula (2004:9) define "gender lens" as an assessment of how women and men affect and are affected by policies, programmes, projects and activities. They further note that a "gender lens" enables recognition that relationships between women and men can vary depending on the context. It takes into account gender roles, social and economic relationships and needs, access to resources and other constraints and opportunities.

The idea of viewing news simply as news emanates from the 1990s where the production of news was seen purely from a professional point of view and "non-gender specific" (Lavie & Lehman-Wilzig, 2003:8). Mawarire (2011:57) argues that the viewing of "news as news" is a masculine view which fails to take cognisance of the gender lens mentioned above. Mawarire further argues that to "think professionally is evidently not compatible with thinking as a woman". The excuse of objectivity is a "defensive strategy" (Glazener, 1989:128). Van Zoonen (1994:14) contends that even women who hide behind "objectivity and neutrality" fail to realise that these are off-springs of hegemony of masculine modes of thinking. Although journalists such as Bikitsha claim to have done extensive coverage of female politicians' struggles, it appears as if such contributions were negligible

as the content analysis showed a clear lack of a link between female politicians and gender-based violence stories. One journalist, Swart, who argued that she made this link, pointed out that she found female politicians to be disinterested and disconnected to the advancement of other women but only concerned with keeping their positions. If this is true, then one cannot solely blame journalists for omitting views of female politicians on gender-based violence.

The journalists and editors acknowledged that it was wrong to write stories that reinforced women's oppression and stereotypes. Bikitsha noted that the fact that women were always stereotyped and portrayed negatively was what motivated her in the first place to begin her column on young black women's experiences. But Swart brought in an interesting angle when she noted that the reason why women politicians were stereotyped and covered negatively was that they did not behave differently from men who "came across as equally incompetent, uncaring and disconnected from their constituencies". The women that Swart referred to were described as "substitutes who are permitted to play the male rules only with the approval of men" (Blue, 1988:107). Blues further asserts "substitutes pose no threat because they are immediately dropped if they don't play the game or perform". In other words, journalists are failing to see what Joseph (2011:40) refers to as the gender lens because the female politicians behave just like males.

Next to be discussed is the section on content analysis.

6.4 Section Two: Content Analysis

Gender-based Violence:

News Reports

Although there was a general awareness of gender-based violence in news reports about gender-based violence, female politicians were not part of the narrative even in extreme cases of violence. Johnson (2010:66) observes that restricting meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders stems from the fact that gender-based violence is treated as a minor crime. The blame cannot be shouldered by journalists and editors alone. Interviews with journalists and editors indicated a lack of accessibility on the part of the female politicians when Dawes observed that the ministry dealing with those issues was "incompetent". Swart pointed out that female politicians, particularly those in ministerial positions, were more concerned about their positions rather than the upliftment of other women. Zille was the only female politician linked to a gender-based violence (Underhill, 2010:08). This was because she was at the

centre of the news report that wanted her to comment on the sexual abuse allegations by her male minister. The name of the woman at the centre of the sexual abuse was not revealed and she was not quoted in the news report. But not revealing her name or quoting the woman could have been to protect her as Dawes indicated in the interview that the newspaper only spoke to victims of violence when they were ready. In this case the reason that the woman was not spoken to is not certain. But in the news report, Zille seemed to exonerate the male minister at the centre of the abuse because the woman he allegedly abused had failed to report the minister's abuse to the police. Yet it was public knowledge that most cases of violence against women went unreported because of stigma and fear. Zille's response may be interpreted in many ways. The news report could have been a "male perspective" designed by the media to embarrass Zille because she is an influential female political figure. Ndlovu (2011:19) and Okwemba (2011:244) note that gender-based violence is often told from a male perspective and women's voices are not sought. Zille could have been more concerned with the image of her political position and her party at the expense of the woman at the centre of abuse. But it could have been also that Zille genuinely trusted that her male minister did nothing wrong. But whatever interpretation one may come up with, the point was that female politicians were not talking about one of the most serious problems South Africa faced, namely gender-based violence which is mostly directed against women. Okwemba (2011:244) argues that it is because "male reporters and editors feel gender-based violence touch on, or call into question, their personal behaviours and opinions".

Features, Editorials, Columns and Opinion Pieces

There were no features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces linking gender-based violence with women politicians.

Next to be discussed is the theme of gender oppression and stereotypes.

Gender Oppression and Stereotypes:

News Reports

Findings in Chapter 5 showed that there was concentration on views from the mostly influential female politicians such as Zille, Makhonyane and Sisulu more than on the less - known women leaders. Little-known female politicians were generally mentioned when something controversial had happened. This was so in the case of Botha who had one month's salary suspended for not disclosing about a benefit from the sale of a property,

(Faull, 2011:6), and when Mildred Oliphant and Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde were appointed to ministerial posts (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10). Hooks (2004:155) argues that to create “space” and “location” within a culture of domination is challenging. Hooks further observes that the privileged class backgrounds who often do not understand or share a perspective of the “other” often block their voices. Hooks (2004:156) observes this when she relates her experience about colonisation.

“Yet when we few remain in that – ‘other’ – space. We are often too isolated, too alone, we die there too.”

Hooks further notes that voices that are denied space are on the margin. The lack of female politicians’ voices can be likened to the margin Hooks speaks about. Hooks further observes that “to be in the margin is to be part of the whole but outside the main body.” Hooks describes marginality as more than a place of deprivation and a site of repression. This means that the media may be used as a tool of deprivation or repression for less known female politicians. Fourie (2009:317) rightly notes that only dominant groups use the media. But Amadiume (1997:198) observes that such women who wield power in masculine systems have gained confidence in how the patriarchy system operates.

Features

There were no features on gender oppression and stereotypes.

This brings the researcher to discuss editorials next.

Editorials

There were three editorials written about female politicians (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). But in all of them female politicians were criticised. Xingwana was criticised for walking out of an exhibition because she did not agree with the art displayed. Madikizela-Mandela was blamed for her views about black people not benefiting from the economy, while Motshekga was labelled as incompetent for lowering education standards in South Africa. There was nothing wrong in criticising the female politicians as male politicians can also be challenged in editorials. However, it was ironic that all the three editorials only offered criticism and no positive attributions. For example, the sterling work that the newspaper pointed out in the

news reports about Hogan (Donnelly, 2010:35; Ackmat & Hassan, 2010:27; 31) when she retired from government service did not earn her a place on the editorial section.

Portraying women in negative situations only gives a false sense that women have nothing important to contribute. This is unfortunate because “representation can make truth out of something that is not true” (Summers, 1996:06). Retief (2010:195) calls it “part of the truth”. Retief (2010:194) also argues that stereotyping “leaves no space for differences and merit” and that is “fundamentally unfair”. Retief further argues that there is no space to look at things “freshly and in detail”. In stereotyping women, the media denies society the real picture because it forces society to carry certain stereotypes in its heads. Retief (2010:195) argues that the “media then perpetuate these images and influence people to judge on the basis of pre-conceived ideas”.

Next to be discussed are columns and opinion pieces.

Columns and Opinion Pieces

There were very few columns and opinion pieces about female politicians. Apart from Joemat-Pettersson (2010:28) who contributed an opinion piece about how her agricultural ministry was helping rural farmers with subsistence farming, female politicians were mostly being talked about. This brings to mind what Bikitsha noted in the interviews when she pointed out that women hardly gave their opinions about anything. This shows that the news agenda pursued by journalists at the *Mail&Guardian* was void of women. Yet the journalists claimed professionalism and objectivity despite the fact that some sections of parliamentarians did not have a say in the media. Kruger (2004:139) contends that leaving out women’s perspectives is not only unethical because it results in distortion of reality, but also is unfair.

Very rarely were there any stories that overturned stereotypes except in a comment about Barbra Hogan, the former Public service Minister who had resigned (Achmat & Hassan, 2010:27;31). The newspaper chronicled her life history in ways that most could have found inspiring and stimulating; particularly the sacrifices she made to fight apartheid, by protesting and getting arrested for treason. She later emerged to become one of the most successful ministers who held traditionally male positions of the financial portfolio committee, health and public service ministers.

Other than that female politicians battled to be heard. Their opinions sometimes came through the right to reply (Zille, 2010:32; Motshekga, 2010:42). This happened when they felt they had been injured by news reports written about them or in cases where their views were not sought in the first place. Zille and Motshekga used that option. Although the right to reply is a facility that anyone can use if one feels misrepresented, in the case of the two female politicians it appeared as if it was an act of desperation. Zille (2010:32) sought to clarify an article regarding how her party was tackling poverty. Although she commented in this article, she felt she had not been heard enough. Motshekga (2010:42) felt aggrieved by an editorial (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24) that portrayed her as incompetent compared to her male counterpart, Blade Nzimande. The lack of female politicians' voices shows male hegemony of the news but it weakens journalism practice (Ndlovu, 2011:16). Ndlovu points out that "good journalism demands that all perspectives be sought and fairly reflected in the news media".

Next to be discussed is race, class, culture and language.

On how class/culture and language affected the way the female politicians were covered or represented in the articles.

News Reports

The use of phrases such as "little known" or "political lightweights" to describe newly appointed black female ministers (Rossouw & Mataboge, 2010:10) was likely to make the female politicians feel less confident to speak to the media. Sisulu, Motshekga, Zille and Makhonyane were among the few voices that were given prominence. Blue (1988:107) postulates that this shows that male dominance and control have engineered a culture which has evolved around male ideas, attitudes and experiences, attaching significance and importance to male existence and marginalising women's existence. In this male structure, women are supposed to stand on the sidelines except if they have more privileged positions and more comfort, depending on colour, class and marital status (Blue, 1988:108). A materialistic society has a tendency to categorise people in a particular class and objectifying them so that they are merely parts of a mechanism that can be replaced by other parts (Tong, 1989:211). This description by Tong seems to be the case with the female politicians who hardly spoke, particularly the less known female politicians.

Features

There were no features written on female politicians and class, culture and language.

Editorials

All the editorials published by the *Mail&Guardian* rubbished black female politicians as “buffoons” (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). This undermining of women politicians was achieved through the use of language. Mills (2008:2) observes that language is a tool that can be used to assert who has power over whom. Sometimes the words themselves used in texts are not sexist but it is the belief systems they carry (Mills, 2008:3). In other words, the language is covert, meaning it is difficult to challenge (Mills, 2008:153). Hooks (2004:153) notes that language is a “place of struggle” because words are not without meaning. What Mills and Hooks observe holds true. For example, Xingwana’s walking out of an exhibition because she did not approve of the art that she considered was against her own cultural background earned her a backlash by the newspaper (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24). The editorial comment indirectly implied she was illiterate because she had not read “the work of Frantz Fanon, the Martiniquais psychoanalyst and anti-colonial revolutionary, who was an important influence on Mbeki”. Mbeki is the one who appointed Xingwana. Here language was used indirectly to attack a black female politician because she happened to have a different belief system. Mills (2008:160) argues that this backlash often springs from insecurity around women’s position in society. Mills further observes that the language is made indirect so that no one takes responsibility for the sexism.

In another editorial the use of language was made to demean or belittle Madikizela-Mandela (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28). Firstly the title of the editorial *Winnie’s bitter ashes* by using her first name disrespects her while the words “bitter” and “ashes” suggest an angry woman who has nothing left of her. The comment dismisses her as someone who gave up her right to criticise when she involved herself in fraud by taking an unauthorised trip and taking part in other corrupt activities. The newspaper gave the impression that she should stay silent because any dissenting views from her would be judged according to her past. That is oppression because it denies women opportunities for a fresh start and rise up again politically. It is unclear whether the same attacks would have been made if the racial context was different. But as it is, it may seem as if the denigration of Xingwana and Madikizela-Mandela may be viewed as double oppression for the women, first

as women then as blacks. This is against the background that freedom of expression is a human right and in South Africa this right is enshrined in the Constitution. But Blue (1988:107) contends that freedom is relative to power.

“Those who have power, men, dictate the nature of freedom, they decide and construct the nature of our freedoms ...These rights, e.g. women’s rights, equal opportunities, which are supposedly basic and intrinsic, can be removed at any time without redress, can be used against us and are impossible to enforce without the co-operation and approval of the power holders. They are in fact merely privileges, accorded or withdrawn depending on inclination of those in power, or on the climate of time.”

Next is how the class, culture and language fared in columns and opinion pieces.

Columns and Opinion Pieces

Language was used to disparage the merger between Zille’s political party and that of De Lille’s. The merger was metaphorically likened to a lesbian union which was going “nowhere” (McKaiser, 2010:27). From a feminist point of view these views are homophobic and encourage the discrimination of real lesbians in society which may be typical masculine speech which Mills (2008:130) observes as “speech style aimed at establishing a position in the hierarchy and getting the better of your opponent”. Armstrong (1997:327) argues:

“The use of homophobic language creates an atmosphere of uncritical acceptance of intolerance towards homosexuality whilst reinforcing stereotypical attitudes towards gays.”

De Klerk (1997:145) observes that “high intensity” masculine language is constituted by dominance. The opinion piece by McKaiser does not only exhibit sexist attitude on the part of the *Mail&Guardian* but a hypocritical and contradictory attitude considering the newspaper’s hard hitting attitude in all its editorials in support of gender-based violence (*Mail&Guardian*, Comment, 2010:32; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2011:26).

Next to be discussed are interviews.

6.5 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development media requirements analysis:

Interviews

The findings showed a lack of gender policy at the *Mail&Guardian*. Anyango (2011:35) argues that there cannot be any serious editorial policy on the portrayal of women in the media and on coverage of gender issues without a gender policy. There is fear by male editors that introducing gender policies is a strategy to help women take over (Okwamba, 2008:61). Okwamba further notes that the absence of women in ownership and editorial structures is largely responsible for gender-insensitive reporting. This is contrary to the principles of the Protocol which require the media to take appropriate measures to encourage the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender-sensitive coverage. Although some argue that putting more women on top positions does not necessarily translate to having gender-sensitive stories, Bikitsha's point that the women who get the top positions need support and an awareness of gender issues for them to be able to be useful, is relevant.

Next the author discusses content analysis.

Content Analysis

Gender-based Violence:

News Reports

As noted above, female politicians were not part of the narrative about violence against women except a news story about Zille defending her male minister who was facing allegations of abusing a woman (Underhill, 2010:8). The news report about Zille's defending her male minister against sexual abuse allegations did not come out as a report intended to help to reduce gender-based violence as required by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. This is because, as Johnson (2010:66) notes, there is a tendency to exonerate the perpetrator in gender based-violence stories, which appeared to be the case in the Zille's news report.

Features, Editorials, Columns and Opinion Pieces

There were no features, editorials, columns and opinion pieces that linked gender-based violence and female politicians. This is a clear indication that the role that the Protocol wants

the media to play – that of increasing the number of programmes for, by and about women on gender specific topics and challenge gender stereotypes, is not being adequately realised. It also means the Protocol's call on the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender-sensitive coverage, is also not being taken seriously.

Gender Oppression and Stereotypes:

News Reports

The female subject was often positioned as not good enough in most cases. This was tantamount to gender oppression. By portraying women as not good enough helped undermine women. Female politicians were mostly visible when surrounded by controversy such as scandals or being fired, and when they were involved in conflicts with one another. This was more vivid in the articles about Zille's fights with a fellow former female politician, Love (Donnelly, 2010:8). Zille was against Love's appointment as a chair of a human rights commission. Another example was the news report on Modise's planned take over from another female premier (Mataboge, Rossouw & Letsoale, 2010:3). Searle (1988:254) notes that persistently denigrating women leads to women being undervalued at work; to face sexual harassment or violence when some men find out that women deviate from the submissive role that they have been ascribed.

Features

There were no features on gender oppression and stereotypes.

Editorials

Editorials (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24) also undermined the role of women in society and reinforced gender oppression when women politicians were always criticised in a covert way through the use of language. The Protocol encourages the media to give women voice and challenge gender stereotypes. In this study female politicians were denigrated indirectly. Mills (2008:152) notes that indirect sexism is not overtly stated but contributes to a "chilly climate" aimed at pushing out groups that are not welcome.

The author discusses columns and opinion pieces.

Columns and Opinion Pieces

In the columns and opinion pieces there was an undermining of female politicians' roles and positions in society as well as a reinforcement of gender oppression and stereotypes. Female politicians were sometimes driven to desperate measures of giving opinions such as resorting to the right to reply after they had been denigrated in news reports or editorials. Examples include the case of Zille and Motshekga who had to use the right to reply after news reports were written without their opinions (Zille, 2010:32; Motshekga, 2010:42). This shows that the media is a terrain for what Joseph (2011:40) identifies as "the battle of sexes". This is despite the fact that the Protocol calls on the media in SADC states to take measures to discourage the media from promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children. It discourages the depiction of women as helpless victims of violence and abuse, degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and position in society; reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes.

Next is the quantitative analysis.

6.6 Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis was done to a small extent to establish the frequency in which female politicians were covered and the manner in which they were portrayed in the themes of gender-based violence and in the theme of stereotypes and gender oppression.

From the findings only one news story linked female politicians to gender-based violence (Underhill, 2010:8). There were only three editorials dedicated to gender-based violence in the 48 newspapers reviewed in the two year period (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2011:26; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:32; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2011:38). All three of them did not link female politicians to gender-based violence. This shows the extent to which the newspaper did not find gender-based violence important, despite its observation on gender-based violence that the crime has reached "epidemic" proportions (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:32). In one editorial, gender-based violence was described as a "weapon" of "war against women" (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2011:26).

The three editorials on female politicians (*Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:28; *Mail&Guardian* Comment, 2010:24) criticised them –

again a demonstration that women were only in the news when they had done something negative – which again confirms women's oppression and stereotypes.

There were only four opinion pieces concerning female politicians and only one of these challenged stereotypes (Ackmat & Hassan, 2010:27; 31). It was a salutation to a former female politician who resigned. One was a comment about Mazibuko and what she stood for (Tabane, 2011:31); another was a criticism of Xingwana and how she failed to unveil a budget ahead of the world soccer cup (Anonymous, 2010:23); Another criticised Zille and De Lille's merger of their political parties (McKaiser, 2011:32).

There were four headline teasers concerning female politicians. Two of these were about female politicians about to be fired (Roussow & Mataboge, 2010:10; Mataboge, Rossouw & Letsoalo, 2010:3) and two others highlighted prominent female politicians (Mataboge, 2010:12). One of these involves a sex scandal (Underhill, 2010:8).

6.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter gave a data analysis of the interviews conducted by the researcher with journalists and editors. While they acknowledged the importance of covering gender-based violence and female politicians, their opinion on news values remained traditionally male-skewed. The views did not take into account two reasons, that women, in this case female politicians, were marginalised and needed a special view, and that stories involving women politicians lacked the balance between the positive and the negative. There was a sense of resistance to change and reluctance to accept new ideas judging from the way the journalists and editors dismissed the media requirements contained in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. There was also no agreement on how to increase and improve views of women in the newspaper. While the female journalists and editors acknowledge the imbalances in coverage of female politicians and the way they were misrepresented, there was a sense of resignation because the male editors and journalists did not generally recognise that there was a problem.

The chapter also analysed the theme of gender-based violence and its link to female politicians, which was almost non-existent. It further showed how female politicians were always portrayed in negative light and at times without them giving a voice. It also showed that the newspaper covered prominent female politicians more than the less known female

politicians. Generally female politicians did not give their views as they were mostly talked about and not through.

A brief quantitative analysis side of the study was given. It confirmed the qualitative results. It showed numerically that coverage of female politicians was low. It also showed numerically the lack of editorials on gender-based violence and on female politicians, confirming that gender oppression and stereotypes still persisted despite the newspaper itself being against the idea. The coverage given to female politicians was generally negative.

Overall the *Mail&Guardian* failed to meet the media requirements of the Protocol because it reinforced gender oppression and stereotypes in its coverage of female politicians and did not give adequate voice to female politicians to articulate themselves on important matters such as gender-based violence. Thus it did not take a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence because it did not carry gender-sensitive reporting. From a socialist feminist standpoint, the newspaper is still a site of oppression against women and a highly patriarchal institution where news values continue to be defined from a male perspective.

The next chapter, which is the last, summarises the study before giving concluding remarks and recommendations.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate-how if at all-the *Mail&Guardian* gave voice to South African women politicians in its news coverage between January 2010 and December 2011. This was done by using the media requirements on content of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development as a yardstick. The selected themes were the following: gender-based violence, gender oppression and stereotypes. These themes emanated from articles 29 to 31 of the Protocol which relate to media, information and communication. The study was divided into chapters that dealt with the following.

7.2 Literature Review

This study examined literature that focused on this study's theme, chief of which is female representation in the media. It examined in great detail what the SADC Protocol on Gender Development sought to achieve and how the media requirements-providing the basis of this study-came into play.

7.3 Theoretical Framework

The study focused on women's representation. Feminism as a theoretical framework was deemed as appropriate for this study. The socialist feminist theory was especially selected because it recognises the multiple levels of oppression against women, such as class, culture and language in addition to patriarchy and capitalism. To help conceptualise the theoretical framework, the study gave a historical background of the various feminism waves and the gains that have been achieved.

7.4 Research Design and Methodology

The chapter outline the research design that was appropriate, namely, the case study and the logic behind the choice. It was also stated that the researcher combined both the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and stated how and why this was done.

7.5 Findings

Interviews with journalists and editors showed that journalists did not place importance in viewing news from a gender perspective in the name of professionalism. They did not want to be prescribed to and they defended what they did with very little room of wanting to change. They also did not agree on the solutions to why women continued to be marginalised in the media.

Findings of content analysis showed that female politicians were not commenting on gender-based violence regardless of the seriousness of the issues involved. In one case in which a female politician was linked to gender-based violence, was to defend a man.

Female politicians are the highest authorities that other women may look up to. They influence or shape policy as they get to sit in parliament to formulate laws that govern society. They have been elected by the people who have placed their confidence in them that they can represent them in the major issues that they face. They are naturally in a position where they should be able to articulate the people's concerns. This is not what the study found out. The female politicians' voices were inaudible on many issues that mattered. They were mostly in news when they were being vilified. The stories about them that challenged stereotypes and that provided positive role models, were few and far in between. The lack of female role models for the younger female generation keeps women trapped in suppression and oppression. The media becomes a tool for oppression and deprivation rather than act as a tool for social change.

7.6 Data Analysis

The chapter analysed the findings of the study using socialist feminism theoretical framework as a tool of analysis, together with the Protocol. This chapter showed there was a lack of commitment to place gender-based violence on the news agenda. The lack of diverse opinions on the matter was not surprising. Despite the fact that there was awareness of the problem posed by gender-based violence by journalists of the newspaper gender-based violence was not sufficiently and consistently placed high on the agenda. Female politicians did not adequately participate in the debates on gender-based violence.

7.7 Conclusions

This research shows that journalists are still stuck in news values that are male-biased. This is a major problem in moving forward because unless the journalists and editors acknowledge that there is a problem in the way women are covered and represented, it is difficult to change

the status quo. Until journalists and editors start viewing news from a gender perspective, views from the other half of the population will continue to be missed. There is need for journalists and editors to think creatively about how to report on women in general in ways that are appealing and empowering. There is need for a change of attitude in the way journalists view news. Journalists and editors have an obligation to view female politicians as important sources of news that can comment on fundamental issues confronting society such as gender-based violence. There is need for journalists and editors to balance the way they portray women so that it is not only consistently negative. Journalists and editors should strive to talk to less known female politicians too. The media should not dismiss outside organisations trying to offer a solution in the low coverage of women and in particular gender-based violence. Media should have gender policy that will guide them in how they cover women. Media should revise their codes of ethics to include a clause on the need for the media to provide gender-sensitive reporting, especially on gender-based violence.

7.7.2 Gender-based Violence

This study was interested in how the *Mail&Guardian* – if at all – gave voice to female South African politicians using the media requirements of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development as a yardstick. The answer is that the *Mail&Guardian* failed in this regard. This is because there were no deliberate efforts to engage female politicians on one of the social problems facing the nation-gender-based violence. Observations by some African scholars such as Orkelo Orkelo, that women are sidelined by the media in Africa, particularly on issues that violate women's rights, bodes true for this study. The assertion that news events are framed by ideologies that favour the interests of the powerful as observed by Boyd-Barrett and Newbold is true in this study. The lack of female politicians' voices in news reports concerning gender-based violence is a matter of concern. It does not help to reduce gender-based violence as the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is demanding. Yet female politicians have a strategic role that can be used to ensure that issues that affect women are carried through to parliament where laws are formulated and policies set. The Protocol believes that the media is important in changing mindsets and that female politicians offer fresh perspectives and insight to issues. It is also believed that women are more likely to raise issues of gender inequality and human rights than their male counterparts. This study showed that women were not able to do that because the *Mail&Guardian* did not use them as sources. This happened despite the seemingly gender-consciousness and awareness existing in the newspaper judging from the hard hitting few editorials it penned about gender-based

violence. For example, one of the editorials criticised a judge for downplaying domestic violence in his judgements, yet the newspaper was also guilty of failing to highlight gender-based violence often enough.

The failure to view news stories from a gender perspective is worrying. Missing perspectives of women is like missing the perspective of an entire half of the nation because women form about 52 percent of South Africa's population. It confirms sentiments by some that the role of the media in addressing women's issues is weak. The lack of reporting about female politicians except when they were embroiled in controversy or if they were influential, was in itself a perpetuation of gender oppression and stereotypes by the newspaper.

7.7.3 Gender Oppression and Stereotypes

Women politicians were not a central focus in news as proved in this study. Gallagher's prediction in the Global Media Women Report 2010 that it will take 40 years at this rate to reach gender parity in the media, rings true. This is because there is no commitment by the journalists and editors to change the portrayal of women in the media.

7.8 Recommendations for Future Studies:

7.8.1 Media Requirements Dealing with Structure

This study was concerned about the media requirements on content. This research has also pointed to lack of women in editorial and ownership structure as a potential problem to how women are portrayed in the media. There is a need to investigate further on this assumption. This may include studying a publication where a woman is an editor to establish if treatment of female politicians would be any different. The period 2013 to 2014 may be significant because they are election campaign years in South Africa and also a year before 2015, which is the deadline set by the Protocol to achieve gender equity.

7.8.2 Training on Gender-sensitive Reporting and Research

This research emphasises the lack of a link between female politicians and gender-based violence. Female politicians were reported in the media often when they were involved in scandals, fights among themselves and when they were about to be promoted or fired. There is need for more training on gender-sensitive reporting.

Research can also be carried out in the form of a pilot newspaper which will be using what may be considered a gender-sensitive reporting policy. The pilot newspaper may be guided by the media requirements on content of the Protocol.

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Appendices 1

Research questions

The central research question of this study was: Did the media coverage and representation of female politicians by the Mail&Guardian between 2010 and 2011 meet the media requirements on content of the SADC protocol on Gender and Development?

This question helped to answer the following questions:

- How much coverage was given to female politicians in stories about gender-based violence against women?
- How were women represented in these news reports?
- Did the stories about the female politicians reinforce gender oppression and stereotypes?
- Did race, class, culture and language affect the way the female politicians were covered or represented in news reports?
- What was the newspaper's staff understanding of the media provisions of The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development?
- Did the Protocol influence the selection of news and the way the newspaper represented female politicians?
- Did the newspaper have a gender policy or did specific reporters, covering the gender beat have a gender policy?
- What was the newspaper's ownership and management structure during the research period?
- Did the structure affect the way news was selected and processed?

MAIN PROVISIONS	SPECIFIC TARGETS TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2015
ARTICLES 4-11: CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL RIGHTS Provides for all Constitutions in the region to enshrine gender equality and to give such provisions primacy over customary law. All laws that are discriminatory to women are to be repealed. It also provides for equality in accessing justice, marriage and family rights and the rights of widows, elderly women, the girl child, women with disabilities and other socially excluded groups.	1. Endeavour to enshrine gender equality and equity in their Constitutions and ensure that these are not compromised by any provisions, laws or practices. 2. Review, amend and or repeal all discriminatory laws. 3. Abolish the minority status of women.
ARTICLES 12-13: GOVERNANCE (REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION) Provides for the equal representation of women in all areas of decision-making, both public and private and suggests that this target be achieved through Constitutional and other legislative provisions, including affirmative action. It further stipulates that Member States should adopt specific legislative measures and other strategies, policies and programmes to ensure that women participate effectively in electoral processes and decision-making by, amongst others, building capacity, providing support and establishing and strengthening structures to enhance gender mainstreaming.	4. Endeavour to ensure that 50% of decision-making positions in all public and private sectors are held by women including through the use of affirmative action measures.
ARTICLE 14: EDUCATION AND TRAINING This article provides for equal access to quality education and training for women and men, as well as their retention at all levels of education. It further provides for challenging stereotypes in education and eradicating gender based violence in educational institutions.	5. Enact laws that promote equal access to and retention in primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational and non-formal education in accordance with the Protocol on Education and Training and the Millennium Development Goals. 6. Adopt and implement gender sensitive educational policies and programmes addressing gender stereotypes in education and gender based violence.
ARTICLES 15-19: PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT/ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT This Article provides for the equal participation of women in economic policy formulation and implementation. The article has provisions and targets on entrepreneurship, access to credit and public procurement contracts, as well as stipulations on trade policies, equal access to property, resources and employment.	7. Ensure equal participation by women and men in policy formulation and implementation of economic policies. 8. Conduct time use studies and adopt policy measures to ease the burden of the multiple roles played by women. 9. Adopt policies and enact laws which ensure equal access, benefits and opportunities for women and men in trade and entrepreneurship, taking into account the contribution of women in the formal and informal sectors. 10. Review national trade and entrepreneurship policies, to make them gender responsive. 11. With regard to the affirmative action provisions of Article 5, introduce measures to ensure that women benefit equally from economic opportunities, including through public procurement process. 12. Review all policies and laws that determine access to, control of, and benefit from, productive resources by women. 13. Review, amend and enact laws and policies that ensure women and men have equal access to wage employment in all sectors of the economy.
ARTICLES 20-25: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE This article makes provision for the implementation of a variety of strategies, including enacting, reviewing, reforming and enforcing laws, aimed at eliminating all forms of gender based violence, and trafficking. There are specific stipulations for the provision of a comprehensive package of treatment and care services for survivors of gender based violence, including the access to Post Exposure Prophylaxis and the establishment of special courts to address these cases. There are specific provisions on human trafficking. A section which provides for monitoring and evaluation sets targets and indicators for reducing gender based violence levels by half by 2015.	14. Enact and enforce legislation prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence. 15. Ensure that laws on gender based violence provide for the comprehensive testing, treatment and care of survivors of sexual assault. 16. Review and reform their criminal laws and procedures applicable to cases of sexual offences and gender based violence. 17. Enact and adopt specific legislative provisions to prevent human trafficking and provide holistic services to the victims, with the aim of re-integrating them into society. 18. Enact legislative provisions, and adopt and implement policies, strategies and programmes which define and prohibit sexual harassment in all spheres, and provide deterrent sanctions for perpetrators of sexual harassment. 19. Adopt integrated approaches, including institutional cross sector structures, with the aim of reducing current levels of gender based violence by half by 2015.
ARTICLE 26: HEALTH This article provides for the adoption and implementation of policies and programmes that address the physical, mental, emotional and social well being of women with specific targets for reducing the maternal mortality ratio and ensuring access to quality sexual and reproductive health services.	20. Adopt and implement legislative frameworks, policies, programmes and services to enhance gender sensitive, appropriate and affordable quality health care. 21. Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 75%. 22. Develop and implement policies and programmes to address the mental, sexual and reproductive health needs of women and men; and 23. Ensure the provision of hygiene and sanitary facilities and nutritional needs of women, including women in prison.
ARTICLE 27: HIV AND AIDS This article covers prevention, treatment care and support in relation to HIV and AIDS.	24. Develop gender sensitive strategies to prevent new infections. 25. Ensure universal access to HIV and AIDS treatment for infected women, men, boys and girls. 26. Develop and implement policies and programmes to ensure the appropriate recognition, of the work carried out by care-givers, the majority of whom are women; the allocation of resources and psychological support for care-givers as well as promote the involvement of men in the care and support of People Living with Aids.
ARTICLE 28: PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION This provides for the equal representation of women in conflict resolution and peace building processes as well as the integration of a gender perspective in the resolution of conflict in the region.	27. Put in place measures to ensure that women have equal representation and participation in key decision-making positions in conflict resolution and peace building processes, in accordance with UN Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
ARTICLES 29-31: MEDIA, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION This article provides for gender to be mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies and laws. It calls for women's equal representation in all areas and at all levels of media work and for women and men to be given equal voice through the media. The Protocol calls for increasing programmes for, by and about women and the challenging of gender stereotypes in the media.	28. Take measures to promote the equal representation of women in ownership of, and decision-making structures of the media, in accordance with Article 12.1 that provides for equal representation of women in decision-making positions by 2015.